THE HOLY
LIFE and DEATH
OF THE LADY
LETICE,
Vi-Countess FALKLAND.

WITH THE

Returnes of Spiritual *Comfort* and *Grief* in a Devout Soul,

Represented in Letters to that Honorable Lady; and exemplified in Her.

By JOHN DUNCON Parson (sequestred.)

2 Cor. 1. 12.
We are helpers of your Joy.

The third Edition, Enlarged.

LONDON,
Printed for RICH: ROYSTON, at the *Angel* in *Ivy-lane*, 1653.

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TO
The pious Reader.

Christian Reader,

IT hath fared with me (by the extraordinary blessing of God) as sometimes it doth with Shipwracked Mariners, to be cast off a tempestuous Sea, into a rich Island.

set out for, (attending my [illegible] sex) I could not have promised my self so much content, and satisfaction, (no, not in outward respects) as my happy Shipwrack (by Sequestration from my Parsonage) hath gained me. I lose Houses and Friends, but God provi-

ded (according to his promise, S. Mark 10. 13.) *even these worldly Comforts, with an hundred-fold Advantage.*

I shall offer no other proof for it then that I was received with full Accommodations, and plentifull Conveniencies in the House of the Right Honourable Vi-Countess Falkland.

And in this Family, while I was reaping Carnall Things, there appeared to me, a necessity of sowing Spirituall Things.

This vertuous Lady afflicted with Barrenness in Her Soul, wanted Inward Comforts; and I, being the nearest (though the meanest) of Gods Ministers, undertook that Office of Comforting.

And after frequent Communication with

with this Lady, having learned all Her Objections against Her self; and having seen the chief sorrowes of Her heart, I composed them into these Letters, and annexed these Answers to them, and left them with Her.

And now they are the Figure of a Pious Soul, with its viciſſitudes of Comfort, and Grief; The Lineaments of which Figure I have drawn (as you will underſtand by comparing the Letters, with the Life Prefixed) from that Holy Ladies Soul; leſt ſhe (for whom alone it was at firſt decyphered) ſhould think it too generall; But the Proportions, and Degrees, I drew not exactly from Her; thoſe I heighten here and there, leſt you (for whoſe benefit it is now Publiſhed) ſhould think it too particular.

So it will appear that these Letters, and their Answers, are not a strict Relation, but a Representation: And in them I have taken the Liberty of a Representor, to expresse the height of Comfort, and the depth of Sorrow, suddenly succeeding one the other; One and the same Soul yesterday on the top of Mount Tabor, *shining with the excesse of Comfort, and to Day on the top of* Mount Calvary, *pierced through with the sharpest points of Sorrow; And though this be not ordinary, yet some such there have been and are.*

But you, perhaps, are one of those Holy Soules, who walk in the plain low way; unacquainted with Heights and Depths; And, though so, in this Representation you may see the various Dispensations of God, and from it you

may learn (however God hath been pleaſed to deal with you heretofore; or however he ſhall be pleaſed to deal with you hereafter) to be fervent in Spirit, and to be zealous to the end.

But for The Life *prefixed, That is not a Repreſentation of what this Lady ſhould have been, or how ſhe ought to have lived, and dyed, but a ſtrict Relation of ſome Spirituall Comforts and Griefs, with their Returns; and of many excellent virtues in the late* Vi-Counteſſe Falkland; *which particulars were gathered up and put together, at the requeſt of ſome of Her dear Friends, who have promiſed (as it is hoped you alſo will) to be followers of Her, as ſhe was of Chriſt, and then to ſtrive to excell in every grace and virtue.*

If by any thing in this you receive Comfort, or Benefit, let God have the praise: It was published for example to All; and for ease to the children of Affliction;

By a servant of our
Lord Christ,

I. D.

To

To the Memory of the moſt religious and virtuous Lady, the Lady *Letice*, Vi-Counteſſe *Falkland*.

Her Compariſon with ancient Saints.

SHew me your *Legends*, you in whoſe bright year
More *Saints* & *Martyrs* then *black dayes* appear:
Martyrs and Saints, whoſe conſecrated Names
Stand ſhining there, as in their ſecond Flames.
'Mong'ſt all you *Tecla's*, *Bridget's*, *Friſwid's*; All
Your fiction-Saints; Or which we true Saints call;
You will not find one He, or She, more fit
To be extoll'd, or canoniz'd in Wit,
Then *this departed Lady*, who embalms
All Poetrie, and turns all Verſe to Pſalms.

Come then my holieſt Fires, lend me a Heat
As pure as that which did in *David* beat,
When to's inſpired Harp, and ſacred String,
He did the Deeds of ancient Hero's ſing.
In whoſe high Numbers, and religious ſtrain,
Moſes yet lives, and *Miriam* breathes again.
And who, (*A Poet after Gods own heart,*
As well as Man) ſuch Virtue did impart

To

To his own ſtory, that he thence is ſtill
A Scripture-Saint, made ſo by his own quill.
Had He this Lady, or her Actions ſeen;
She had a part of his rare Pſalter been.
And had ſtood there recorded by his pen,
The holieſt Woman next to holy men.

Her Childhood.

WHoſe Infancie (The time when He begins.
To tempt us with the firſt Aſſault of Sins,
Who in a borrow'd ſhape doth ſtill invade
Our Age, like *Eve*, aſſoon as we are made)
Was ſo quick-ſighted, ſo well taught, that ſhe
Through his falſe paint did then the Serpent ſee;
Then in her Cradle ſtrangled him, whoſe ſuits
Came dreſt i'th' Beauty of forbidden Fruits.

Her Youth.

HEr Youth was like her Infancie, from whence
Began her ſecond State of Innocence.
An Age as harmleſs as if ſtill new-born;
A Time of Day as ſpotleſs as her Morn;
A Stage of Life, in which appear'd all ſeeds
Of after Virtue, yet unmix'd with weeds.
Here did begin her Studies, which then told
How young ſhe was in years, in Grace how old.

Whoſe

Whoſe other Scriptures were Gods creatures, where
She heard him ſpake t' her Eye, as that t' her Eare.
And, like the *Hebrew Shepheard*, in each bluſh
Of Flowers, beheld him flaming in a Buſh (ſound,
Once more unburnt, thence thought ſhe heard a
Which told her, God thus ſeen, made holy ground.
She did not ſpend her Dayes, like ſome who doe
With their youths dreſſings learn youths vices too.
Nor was ſhe ſchool'd in th' art to weave her Hair
Into looſe Braids, and make it thence grow Snare:
Or how to frame her ſmiles, or order looks;
Or make her geſtures paſſe for well-laid hooks;
Such falſe Court engines ſhe bequeath'd to thoſe,
Whoſe virtue is their face, and good parts clothes.

Her Marriage.

HEr riper years did call her to the bed,
Of one who did Her, not her dowrie, wed.
No ſhaft with gold tipt, no dart ſhot from eyes;
No fires were here ſeen which from fancie riſe.
Between theſe curtains, and this nuptial ſheet,
Male virtue did with female virtue meet.
A ſoul with ſoul, and mind here match'd with mind,
The marriage torch held by a God not blind.
A Husband he, and ſhe a Wife, whoſe will
After four child-births was a Virgin ſtill.

Her

HEre, *Noble Lord*, could I bestow on Thee
Such learned Verse as thou did'st once on me,
I on thy Herse should stick poetick Bayes,
And raise thee Statues, made and built of praise.
Who wert thy *Nations glory, Englands pen*;
The best of writing, and of fighting men.
In whom the Camp, and Muses claim'd a part;
A Scholars head, joyn'd to a Souldiers heart.
By whose sword sometimes, but by thy rare quill,
We alwayes conquer'd, and here vanquish't still.
But since thou left'st us, to write well hath been
By our new times held a Republick sin.
All wit, like thine, now undergoes thy fate;
First call'd *Malignant*, and a *Foe to th' State*;
Then murther'd by the dul, mechanicks rude,
Half beast, half man, *Fox-Tinker* multitude.
Say, O ye *Coblers, Weavers, Tinkers*, you
Whose second trade is War, and Preaching; who
New prentices oth' field (O servile rout!)
Have there against your Prince your time serv'd out;
What expiation, what requitall can
A legion of you make for this one man,
Were a whole legion slain, or felt the doom
Of her who perisht on *Achilles* tomb?

You

You boaſt of teaching Lords, and Ladies, who
(Wives to thoſe Lords) uſe to expound, like you;
When you have prais'd them with your holieſt
And joyn'd your paint to their hypocriſies; (lies,
Amongſt them all you will not find one life
Like to this Lords; or 'mongſt them all a wife
Like to this Lady; whoſe true zeal, and hear
T'wards God was more then they can counterfeit.

Her Widowhood.

WHo now a Widow, and her *dear Lord* ſlain,
Liv'd S*t. Paul's Matron*; that's a maid again.
A *Scripture Veſtal*, one whoſe chaſte deſire
Call'd it adultery not to watch one fire.
A Goſpell Lucrece to all ſecond loves,
One made of ice t'ward *Venus*, and her doves.
In whom all looſe thoughts did ſo coldly grow,
That they, who courted her, made love to ſnow.

Her devotion and zeal.

YEt in this coldneſs, and obdurate froſt,
Still burn'd a holy fire conceal'd, not loſt.
A fire, whoſe pure flames ſtill flew up, like thoſe
Which in wing'd Pyramids from Altars roſe;
A fire, which in moſt others kindles vice;
But here made morn, and evening ſacrifice.

O had you heard her fervent prayers, (the key
With which she open'd and lock't up the day)
Had you ere in her week-day Temple been,
Her consecrated closet; and there seen
This Lady on her knees, whilst with her eyes
She climb'd the stars, and did invade the skies;
Had you there mark'd what clouds of sighs, what (shoures
Of tears she rain'd at penitential houres;
How humble in her looks, and yet how stout;
How earnest, wrestling, and yet still devout;
You'd write of her like me, and say that hence
Heaven did once more suffer violence.

Her tenderness of Conscience.

COme now ye twilight saints, religious bats,
Who swallow camels, and yet strain at gnats;
You, whose wilde scruples, heighten into rage,
Are now the zeal, and madness of our age,
Shew me one Lady like to this; who still
Was so precise, so fearfull to doe ill, (plac'd
That her indifferent thoughts, words, dreams were
'Mongst things to be repented; nay, at last,
She question'd *her good Deeds*, and did begin
To call imperfect virtue venial sin.

Her Charity.

YEt look upon her *Alms*, or ask the poor,
(Who ſtill put off their hunger at her door,
Together with their rags) how often they,
Who came there naked, went wel-cloath'd away:
Ask them how oft the hedge, and high-way gueſt,
Transform'd her table to the Scripture feaſt,
Where the invited were all lame, or blind,
Beggers half-famiſh'd, who till then ne'r din'd;
They'l ſay, ſhe did *Chriſt* in his *members* ſee,
And all that wanted her relief, were He.

Nor did ſhe, like our *Phariſees*, diſpenſe
Her gifts before men, to win praiſe from thence.
Her charity was ſecret, no alms known,
The poor reliev'd, without a trumpet blown.
No corner of a ſtreet, no bounty cleft,
Her right hand ſtill was ſtranger to the left.
Her doles, indeed, were Scripture wonders, we
Once more *ſaw Loaves, and Fiſhes multiplie*
Between the givers hands; from whence they grew
Full baskets, and fed thouſands; how, none knew.

Her Death.

ANd now, though I cannot report her death
In words as holy as her dying breath,

Wich

With which expir'd her ſoul, as free from ſin
And ſporleſs almoſt, as when't firſt came in
To her frail body; yet as oft as I
Doe read of Saints advanc'd above the skie,
Sitting on amber clouds, and cloath'd in white,
Me thinks a glittering Angel bids me write,
My revelation too, *where Thrones appear,*
And ſhe in thoſe white Robes ſhe put on here.

I: M: *ex Æ: C: Ox.*

An Elegie,

Written to ſome Ladies of theſe Times.

YOu, who thought *Chaplains* onely *things of State,*
And count Them (*Coachmen Preaching*) out of date,
Learn here their *holier uſe*; and if you love
Your Souls as well as Bodies; and would prove
Your *Plea* and *Evidence* to Heaven, and
Make your *Election ſure*, as Goods, or Land;
Having all Conſcience-ſcruples ſet as cleare
As your Law-doubts, or Blood-diſtempers are:
Judge, if *Divines* be of leſſe Value, than
Your coſtly *Lawyer*, or *Phyſitian*.
And think not that ſix Words or Lines of theirs
More precious be, then *Sermons* are and *Prayers*.

Had

Had You been e're ſo well, as to be ſick
Of ſpirituall diſeaſes, and were quick
With the ſouls iſſue, Virtue, till you grew
Big with devotion, and were *Born anew*:
You then would hold the *Caſuiſts* as *deare*,
As, in your other *Labors*, Midwives are.
Then you'd prefer theſe *Cordial Letters*, 'bove
All flattering-love-Epiſtles, which doe prove,
When read by th'ſober and judicious eye,
But handſome lies, and prettie blaſphemie:
And are to theſe no more *Canonical*,
Then if with *Balzac* you compare *Saint Paul*.

Would our *New Teachers* make this Book their ſchool,
Here they might learn *to ſet a broken ſoul*,
And ſcatter ſacred calms into a breſt,
Though 'twere with all late niceties *poſſeſt*.
While others lightning caſt in ſtead of light,
And carie both in *looks*, and *ſayings*, night;
Giving *ſolutions* difficult as the *Caſe*;
(Like thoſe that draw Pictures with half a face)
Our *Oracle* here gives Anſwers full and clear,
As Face to Face doth in the Glaſs appear.

Nor doth he *ſtorm*, but meekly checks a ſin
In that ſweet ſtile, that ſtill the Goſpel's in.

Which

Which makes his *Threatnings* amiably calm,
And his *Launce* gentle as anothers *Balm*;
Curing a *wounded ſpirit* without loſſe,
While he refines the metal, burns the droſſe.

Hence, to ſouls ſunk in tears, his counſels prove
Welcome, as *Noahs comforter*, the *Dove*.
Welcome *as Peace* would be to all that are,
Not ſlain, but worſe, ſlav'd by a ſev'n *years* war.

See how *day* breaks! how *joy* and *ſadneſs* greet!
Thus have I ſeen *Sun-beams* and *ſhowers* meet,
Leaving 'ith' skie the *gawdie Bowe*, to let
Us know, we were not to be *drown'd*, but *wet*.
And if our Faith be ſtrong, we *may* ev'n here
See as true ſigns of ſafety, as is there.

O happy Chriſtians! happy in each Croſs!
Do but compare theſe comforts with *your* loſs,
And *you'l* no more complain, then he that is
Ruin'd to *Heaven*, *tortur'd* into *Bliſs*.

But among all the *Cordials*, there is none
Sufficient to redreſſe and ſtill the moane
Made at *his Ladies death*: 'tis that alone
Scandals Divines, as Agues long have done

The

The best Physicians; nothing can revive
Our buri'd Souls, but bringing her alive.
And that our *holy Chymist* doth essay
In his *last Letter*, where the *Mother* may
See her *own Daughter* risen from the Dead;
So Risen, as ne're more to be Buried.

And now, though *Paul* forbids her Sex to *preach*,
Yet may her *Life instruct*, and her *Death teach*,
For *good workes* ne're were silenc'd. If we then
Should see a Massacre of Holy men,
With whom all Truths and Duties too should fall,
Yet in *Her practise* we might find them all.
Her *Deeds* were more then boldest Nuns doe *vow*;
The *Legends* will turn a true *Hist'rie* now;
While all *religious wonders* they aver,
Are not done onely, but out-done by Her.
Each morn the *Law and Gospel* were her *glass*,
And *Featlies Handmaid* her *Attendant* was.
Nor did she late or early draw in Air,
But she return'd it back in *Praise*, or *Pray'r*.

Tis true, Sh'had many scruples; But they're such
As neither *Gods*, nor *Kings* Prerogative touch.
'Mongst all her holy Doubtings, you'l find none
Startling at *Gods Decrees*, or *Three in One*.

Such

Such Myſteries her Faith had conquer'd; *She*
Had only of *Her ſelf a jealouſie.*
While *She* a *Judge* of others Acts was known,
She's a ſeverer Tyrant of her own.
Suſpicious of her beſt performance, ſtill
She fear'd ſhe err'd; *leſs Good was with her Ill.*
And though full fraught with *Maries graces*, yet
She would her ſelf *Magdalens penance* ſet;
And waſh thoſe Tears with Tears; thus oftentimes
More ſorrowing for *her Prayers*, then *we* for *crimes.*
Bleſs me! how croſs to hers hath our courſe bin!
She *mourn'd for Innocence*, we joy in ſin.
Though theſe worſt times *uncharitable* be
Even to *Charity* it ſelf, yet ſhe
As Coſtly was in *Alms* and *Piety*,
As *City Madams* are in *Luxury.*
And made more *Viſits* to the *Poor*, then thoſe
Do to the *Rich*, when they've *new Coach & Cloaths.*

Thus *Good*, thus *Pious*, ſhe's the *happy Spouſe*
Of Him, who *knew* beſt how to *judge* and *chuſe*,
Falkland the Learn'd, whoſe *meaneſt parts* were *great*
Enough to make *All other Lords Compleat.*
Nor did He wed her to *joyn Fortunes*, and
Lay *Bags* to *Bags*, and couple *Lands* to *Land*;

Such

Such *Exchange ware* he scorn'd, whose Nobler eye
Saw in her *Virtues, Rich Conveniency.*
Her Soul lay well for His, and made as fit,
A Match, as when *Discretion* meets with *Wit.*
His *Knowledge* rectifi'd Her *Zeal*, and then
Her *Faith* His *Reason* qualifi'd agen.

Thus Two Elixirs mingled safely pass,
Whereas each single often breaks the Glass.

R: W: *ex Æ: C: Ox:*

THE END.

THE VERTUOUS, Holy, Christian LIFE and DEATH OF THE LATE LADY, *LETICE*, Vi-Countess FALKLAND.

With some Additionals.

The holy Life and Death of the Lady LETICE *Vicounteſſe* FALKLAND, *written in a Letter to her Mother the Lady* MORISON *at Great* Tew *in Oxford-ſhire.*

Madam,

IT is the deſire of ſome *Honourable Perſonages* to have an exact account of the *Death* of your moſt dear *Daughter*, the Lady *Falkland*; *they* being privy to much piety in *her life*, expect (as well they may) ſomewhat moſt *remarkable* in *her ſickneſs* and *death.*

And for the *comfort of you*, and for the *ſatisfaction* of *them*, I have gathered together ſome ſcattered particulars of *her life*, *ſickneſs*, and *death*, and have ſent them unto *you.*

That the moſt *precious perfume* of *her*

name, being *powred out* (*like S.* Mary Magdalens *box of Spiknard*) *may fil your*, and *their houſes*.

And though this *relation* of ſo many eminent *virtues* in *her*, would not (perhaps) have appeared ſo handſome from *your* own *pen* (becauſe ſo deep a ſhare of the praiſe belongs to you) yet you need not bluſh at the delivering of *it*; it may conſiſt with *your modeſty*, to be a *witneſſe* of the truth of theſe particulars; though not to be a *Publiſher* of them.

And if the *memory* of that moſt holy *Lady*, continue *precious* amongſt us; and *her* holy *example* efficacious with us; and *God* (who *ſanctified her* here, and now *glorifies her* in heaven) be magnified and honoured for his *mercies* and *graces*, I have all I aim at.

I ſhall note ſomewhat remarkable in the very beginning of *her Chriſtian race*; more, in *her progreſs*, and *proficiency* in *it*; and then come to the laſt *ſtages*, when the *crown*, at the end of the *race*, was (as it were) within *her ſight* and *view*.

This *elect Lady* ſet out early in the ways of God, in the dawn or morning of her Age: There was care taken while ſhe was young, that ſhe ſhould be brought up in the

the nurture and admonition of the Lord; She came not from her Nurſes arms, without ſome knowledge of the principles of Chriſtian religion.

While ſhe was very young, her obedience to her Parents (which ſhe extended alſo to her Aunt, who had ſome charge over her, in her Fathers houſe) was very exact; and as ſhe began, ſo ſhe continued in this gracious, and awfull temper of duty, and obſervance: I have heard you ſay (Madam) that you cannot remember any one particular, wherein at any time, ſhe diſobeyed her Father, or you.

That her time might not be miſ-ſpent, nor her employments tedious to her, the ſeverall houres of the day had variety of employments aſſigned to them; and the intermixing of *prayer*, *reading*, *writing*, *working*, and *walking*, brought a pleaſure to each of *them*, in *their* courſes; ſo that the day was carryed about faſter, then ſhe would, and ſhe begins in this her youth, to abridge her ſelf of her ſleep, and was oft-times at a book in her Cloſet, when ſhe was thought to be in bed.

You remember well, I preſume, the *Purſe* her young fingers wrought for her own *alms*, and how importunately ſhe

would beg your ſingle money to *fil* it; and as greedy ſhe was of *emptying* it too; the *poore* ſeldome went from the houſe without the *alms* of the young *daughter*, as wel as of the *Parents*.

And how conſtant ſhe was then, at her private Prayers, I gheſſe, by what I have heard from the keeper of *your* houſe; when ſtrangers were in *her* own *room* where *ſhe* ordinarily had *her* retirements, he was called to give *her* the key of ſome other chamber for that purpoſe, at *her houre of Prayer*; *ſhe* would procure a new *Oratory*, rather then *omit*, or *defer* that *duty*.

And how powerfull with God, the *lifting up her pure hands every where*, in this her innocent *Childhood* was, ſoon appeared. For while *her piety* and *holineſs* was in this bud, a violent attempt there was made to blaſt it. About the *thirteenth yeer* of *her* Age, there was a ſtorm of temptation raiſed in *her*, and ſome arguments the *tempter* had ſuggeſted to drive *her* to deſpaire of Gods mercy towards *her*: And this I note the rather, becauſe it is not ordinary at ſuch yeares, to have attained to that growth, as to be thought fit for thoſe encounters:

But

But God upheld *this young twig*, againſt ſuch a ſtorm, which hath torn up many a *fair tree*: For after ſome *anguiſh* of *ſpirit*, and *patience* in the *combate*, and earneſt *prayers*, *Gods grace was ſufficient for her*: and ſurely it was not the *ſtrength* of her *hands*, at this Age, but the *pureneſs* of *them*, which prevailed for *her*.

Some there are, whom God leads from the ſpirituall *Ægypt*, to *Canaan*, not by this way of the Philiſtines, leſt they ſhould repent when they ſee war, and turn back again into *Ægypt*, *Exod.* 13. 17. But *her* (it ſeems) God trained up in this military courſe; and from *her* youth exerciſed *her* in it, that *ſhe* might be expert at it.

After this conqueſt, *her ſoul* enjoyed much *peace* and *tranquillity*, and *ſhe* went on moſt *cheerfully in holy duties*, and *taſted* much *comfort*, and *delight* in *them*: And *her heart* was ever and anon ſo full, that out of the abundance of it, ſhe would ſay, *Oh what an incomparable ſweetneſs there is in the muſick upon* Davids *Harp*! *oh, what heavenly joy there is in thoſe Pſalmes, and in prayers, and praiſes to God! How amiable are the courts of Gods houſe; how welcome the dayes of his ſolemn worſhip!*

And now, nothing can hinder *her* from

thoſe *holy Aſſemblies*; Every *Lords day* conſtantly, forenoon, and afternoon, *ſhe* would be with the earlieſt at them: Some while (when *ſhe* wanted a convenience of riding) *ſhe* walked cheerfully three or foure miles a day, as *young*, and as *weak*, as *ſhe* was, to them: And at night *ſhe* accounted the joyes, and the refreſhments, which *her* ſoul had been partaker of, a ſufficient recompence, for the extream wearineſs of *her body*,

And within a ſhort while, by reading good Authors, and by frequent converſe with learned men, *ſhe* improves (by Gods help) *her* natural talents of *underſtanding*, and *reaſon*, to a great degree of *wiſdome* and *knowledge*.

And now *theſe riches*, of *her piety*, *wiſdom*, *quickneſs of wit*, *diſcretion*, *judgement*, *ſobriety*, and *gravity of behaviour*, being once perceived by Sir *Lucius Cary*, ſeemed Portion enough to *him*: Theſe were *they*, *he* priſed above worldly Inheritances, and thoſe other fading acceſſions, which moſt men court.

And *ſhe* being married to *him*, riches and honour, and all other worldly proſperity, flow in upon *her*, and conſequently to proceed in *holineſs* and *godlineſs* growes

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an harder task, then before it ſeemed to be: it being much more difficult *when riches* and *honour* thus *increaſe*, then *not* to *ſet our heart upon them*.

Yet God enabled *her* by his *grace* for this alſo; for when poſſeſſion was given *her* of *ſtately Palaces*, *pleaſantly ſeated*, and moſt *curiouſly* and *fully furniſhed*, and of *revennes* and *royalties* anſwerable, though your Ladyſhip hath heard *her* acknowledge Gods great goodneſs towards *her*, for theſe temporall preferments; yet neither *you*, nor any of *her* friends, could perceive *her heart* any whit exalted with *joy* for them.

They were of the Babylonians retinue, who when they had ſeen *Hezekiahs riches* and *treaſures*, ſet *their hearts* upon *them*, *Iſay* 39. *this true Iſraelite* reſerved *her* affections, for thoſe *riches* which never fade, and for thoſe *dwellings*, which are above, where the *City* is of *pure Gold*, and the *walls garniſhed with pretious ſtones*.

This confluence of all worldly felicities and contentments, did ſo little affect *her*, that there were ſome ſeemed diſpleaſed at it; and then *ſhe* would attribute much of it, to a *melancholick diſeaſe*, which was

then upon *her*; And though I deny not, but that ſome worldly *delights* might *fall* by the *hand of her melancholy*, yet doubtleſſe where the *diſeaſe* ſlew its *hundreds*, *grace* ſlew its *ten thouſands*.

And in this condition ſome years paſſed, during which time, *ſhe* was moſt conſtant at *Prayers*, and *Sermons*, and frequently received the *bleſſed Sacrament*; and although now, and then, *ſhe* felt not *her* wonted *ſpiritual Comforts*, but in ſtead of them had ſome *anguiſh*, and *bitterneſs of ſpirit*, yet by the adviſe of good Divines, and by her ordinary help of *Prayer*, *ſhe* recovered ſoon *her* peace and joy.

Thus in ſeverall conditions of youth, and *ripe yeares* of *virginity*, and *marriage*; and amongſt contrary temptations, of *adverſity*, and *proſperity*; *affliction*, and *comfort*, *ſhe* continues that courſe of *holy Life*, which *ſhe* had begun; a great *proficiency*, and a far *progreſſe* this: yet I crave leave to reckon it all into *her beginning*, for this was but ſlow in reſpect of that great agility, and quick ſpeed, *ſhe* attained unto, in the other part of *her ſpiritual race*.

Her proficiency and *progreſſe* I ſhall account

count from that time, when *her proſperity* began to abate; when *Her dear Lord*, and moſt beloved *Huſband*, that he might be like *Zebulon*, (a ſtudent *helping the Lord againſt the mighty*, *Judge*. 5. 14.) went from his *Library* to the *Camp*; from his *Book* and *Pen*, to his *Sword* and *Spear*; and the conſequent of that, an inevitable neceſſity, that *ſhe* muſt now be *divorced* from *him*, for a while, whom *ſhe* loved more then all the things of this world; this was a ſad beginning: but that *totall divorce*, which, ſoon after, death made between *him* and *her*; that *he* ſhould be taken away by an untimely death, and by a violent death too, this, this was a moſt ſore affliction to *her*; the ſame ſword which killed *him*, pierced *her* heart alſo.

And this heavy affliction which God ſent upon *her*, *ſhe* interpreted for a loud call from heaven, to a further *proficiency* in *piety* and *virtue*.

And yet *ſhe* feares it may be a puniſhment alſo upon *her*, for ſome ſin, or other, and therefore ſtrictly examines *her ſelf*, and ranſacks every corner of *her heart*, to finde out wherein *ſhe* had provoked God to lay this great affliction on *her*; and to make ſure, *ſhe renues her repentance* for all

all *her* tranſgreſſions; and *her godly ſorrow* for *her* ſins paſt, is as freſh, as if it had bin for the ſins of yeſterday.

And now *ſhe* addreſſes *her ſelf* to a *Divine* of great *eminency* for *piety*, and *learning*; and from *him ſhe* takes directions for a more ſtrict courſe of life in this *her Widowhood*, then formerly; now *ſhe* forgetting quite what was behind, preſſes forward to what was before, and, as if *ſhe* had done nothing yet, *ſhe begins* anew.

And though the greateſt and chiefeſt part of *her* Chriſtian work, was locked up cloſe within *her ſelf*, and ſome of it very ſtudiouſly, and induſtriouſly concealed by *her* (that *ſhe* might be ſure no degree of vainglory ſhould creep upon *her* with it) yet *much* of it appeared, by the effects, and is now forced to come abroad before us.

Her firſt and grand employment was, to read and underſtand, and then (to the utmoſt of *her* ſtrength) to practiſe our *moſt bleſſed Saviours Sermon* upon the Mount, in the *fift*, *ſixt*, and *ſeventh Chapters* of Saint *Matthew's Goſpell*; and having read over a moſt compleat (though compendious *Comment*) upon that *Sermon*,

ſhe

ſhe ſet forthwith, upon the work of *practiſing* it, and began with thoſe *virtues*, to which the *beatitudes* are annexed.

And *her mercifulneſs* was none of thoſe *virtues*, which *ſhe* could at all conceal from us; *much* of *her eſtate* (we ſaw) given yearly to thoſe of *her Kindred*, which were capable of Charity from *her*: And *ſome* of *her* neer *neighbours*, who were very *old*, and not able to work; or very *young*, and not fit for work, were *wholly maintained* by *her*: To other poor children *ſhe* contributed much, both for their *ſpirituall*, and their *temporall* wel-being; by erecting a *Schoole* for them, where they were to be taught both to *read*, and to *work*: much care *ſhe* took, that no man, or woman, or childe ſhould want employment; that their own hands might bring them in a competent ſubſiſtence; and accounted that the beſt contrivement of *her* eſtate, which ſet moſt poor people on work; for if it were to their profit, *ſhe* little regarded *her* own detriment in it.

So that *her* principal care herein, was to keep them from Idleneſſe (*that root of all ſin and wickedneſſe*) for by another contrivement of *her* eſtate, *ſhe* might have received more profit, and thereby have been

been better able, to relieve them, though by this only, *ſhe* was able to ſet them on work.

A moſt eminent piece of *mercifulneſſe* this, where *corporall* and *ſpirituall mercy* went together, and *wiſdome* guided both.

And for the *poor* at home, and for *ſtrangers* at the dore, ſhe was very charitable in *feeding the hungry*, and *refreſhing the faint* and *weak*; and for *clothing* the *naked*, in ſome extremities you ſhould ſee this *Lady her ſelf* goe up and down the houſe, and begge garments from *her* Servants backs, (whom *ſhe* requited ſoon after with new) that the *poor* might not goe *naked*, or *cold* from her dore: So that *ſhe* was not only a liberall *Almoner* to the *poor*, but alſo an earneſt *Solicitor* for them: And when it was objected, that many *idle* and *wicked* people, were by this courſe of *charity*, relieved at *her* houſe, *her* anſwer was; *I know not their hearts, and in their outward carriage and ſpeech, they all appear to me good and virtuous; and I had rather relieve five unworthy Vagrants, then that one member of Chriſt ſhould goe empty away*; And for *harboring ſtrangers*, the many inconveniencies, ordinarily enſuing upon it, could not

not deter *her* from it; ſometimes for ſome weeks together, *they* were entertained by *her*.

And ſince *her* death, I hear of plentifull reliefe, *here*, at *London*, and at *Oxford*, ſent *privately* to *Priſons*, and *needy* perſons, with a ſtrict charge that it ſhould not be known from whence it came; *She would not have her left hand know, what her right hand gave.*

And this *her mercifulneſs* could not be bounded within the limits of *friends*, it extended it ſelf to *her enemies* too: when there were ſome ſtore of them taken Priſoners by the Kings Souldiers, and in great need, *ſhe* conſulted how *ſhe* might ſend reliefe to them: and when it was anſwered, that ſuch an *act* would raiſe jealouſies (in ſome) of *her* loyalty to His *Majeſty*, *ſhe* replied, *No man wil ſuſpect my loyalty, becauſe I relieve theſe Priſoners, but he would ſuſpect my Chriſtianity, if he ſhould ſee me relieve a needy Turk, or Jew: however, I had rather be ſo miſunderſtood, (if this my ſecret Almes ſhould be known) then that any of mine enemies (the worſt of them) ſhould periſh for want of it.*

And this one inſtance, and reaſon of *hers*, is ground enough to believe, *ſhe* failed

led not to relieve *her* enemies, as often as occaſion required.

But beyond all, *her mercifulneſſe* towards the *ſick*, was moſt laudable: *her* proviſion of *Antidotes* againſt *infection*, and of *Cordials*, and other ſeverall ſorts of *Phyſick* for ſuch of *her* neighbours as ſhould need *them*, amounted yearly to very conſiderable ſummes: And though in diſtributing ſuch *medicinall proviſions*, *her hand* was very *open*, yet it was *cloſe* enough in applying them, *her skil* (indeed) was more then ordinary, and *her warineſs* too.

When any of the poor neighbours were ſick, *ſhe* had a conſtant care, that they ſhould neither want ſuch *relief*, nor ſuch *attendance*, as their weak condition called for, and (if need were) *ſhe hired Nurſes* to ſerve them: And *her* own frequent *viſiting* of the pooreſt *Cottagers*, and *her* ready *ſervice* to them, on their *ſick-bed*, argued as great *humility*, as *mercifulneſs* in *her*; yet the Bookes of *ſpirituall exhortations*, ſhe carried in *her* hand to *theſe ſick perſons*, declared a further deſign *ſhe* had therein, of promoting *them* towards *heaven*, by reading to *them*, and by adminiſtring words *of holy counſell* to *them*: There

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is no *ſeaſon* more *fit* (*ſhe* would ſay) for *ſowing* good *ſeed*, then this; while the *ground* of their *hearts* is *ſoftned*, and *melting* with *ſorrow*, and *ſickneſs*; And to gain this advantage it was, that *ſhe* was ſo frequent a *Viſitor* of the ſick, going day after day, to their *bed-ſide*: This Honourable Lady hath been obſerved ſitting in a Cottage, waiting the *ſick womans* leiſure, till the *ſlumbers* and *fits* were over, that *ſhe* might read again to *her*, and finiſh the work *ſhe* had begun.

And of late when *ſhe* could not doe this good office, *in her own perſon* (*ſhe* growing ſickly and weak) yet *ſhe* would doe it ſtill *by proxie*: for ſome of *her friends* or *ſervants* were deputed by *her*, to goe to the *ſick*, with *her Books* too, daily; and now and then moſt of *her family* (who were fit for ſuch an imployment) were ſent abroad on this errand.

Thus ordinarily in all *her* workes of *corporall mercy*, *ſhe* added *workes of ſpirituall mercy* too; relieving the wants of the *body*, and of the *ſoul* together, *inſtructing*, and *exhorting*, and earneſtly *perſwading* the *poor* and the *ſick* to ſome *virtue* or other, for their *ſoules* health.

Herein following the *command* in this

Sermon,

Sermon, and alſo the *example* of the *Preacher*, *our moſt bleſſed Saviour*: who, when he *cured* the *diſeaſes* of the *body*, *cured* the *diſeaſes* of that infirm *ſoul* too; and at the ſame time, with one word, adminiſtred to the *ſick* and *impotent*, *both health and grace*: our Saviours *practiſe* is the *gloſs* upon his own *Text*; And this *handmaid of his*, was for the *text*, and this *gloſſe* too of *mercifulneſſe*.

And as for *this*, ſo for *meekneſs* alſo, *ſhe* was moſt *eminent*: *ſhe* was *ſecond* to none of her *Sex*, and *Age* (I believe) among us, for *perſpicacity of underſtanding*, & clearneſs of *judgement*; yet as far from *ſelf-conceit*, as from *ignorance*: *her* wont indeed was upon debates, to object till all arguments, *ſhe* could think on, to the contrary, were ſatisfied; and when that was once done, no cavill was heard, but *her* aſſent readily given; and this ready *ſubmiſſion* of *her judgment*, to the beſt reaſons, I mention, for the *meekneſs* of her *underſtanding*: herein *this Lady* excelled ſome of the chiefeſt *Rabbies*, that *her knowledge did not puff up, but edifie*.

And *her underſtanding* leading the way in *meekneſs*, *her will* chearfully followed in it too; as ſoon as *her underſtanding* was ſatiſ-

ſatisfied, *her will* bowed preſently and obeyed: *ſhe* ſeldome denied to doe, what *ſhe* was convinced was fit to be done.

The greater difficulty was with *her affections*: *her* naturall *temper ſhe* would oft complain inclined *her* to *anger*; and being ſo well aware of it *ſhe* moſt diligently obſerved *her* ſelf, and did in a great degree conquer that *froward inclination*: and that good meaſure of *meekneſs* (in this kind) which *ſhe* attained unto, was the more commendable, becauſe of the many great difficulties *ſhe* met with, in it.

Then for *peaceableneſſe*: *as much as in her lay, and as far as was poſſible, ſhe had peace with all men*; *ſhe ſuffered her ſelfe* to be *defrauded*, and damaged in *her* Eſtate, rather then *ſhe* would diſquiet a debtor, by ſuits at law; for *peace* is *æqnivalent* (ſaid ſhe) to the *ſumme* detained.

And for differences in Law among others, where *ſhe* was not a *Party*, *her Chriſtianity* engaged *her* to wiſh, and endeavour for reconciliation amongſt *Brethren*; but eſpecially, when *controverſies* aroſe between *Neighbors, and Pariſhioners*, *ſhe* made uſe of all *her power* and *art*, to *reconcile* them.

And *ſhe* had *her Antidotes* here too, as well

well as *her medicines*; to prevent *contentions*, as well as to cure *them*. It coſt *her* a good ſum, your Ladyſhip knowes, a while ſince to prevent a *contention*, *ſhe* foreſaw ariſing among the *neighbours*, about the choice of a *Pariſh Officer*: *ſhe hired one*, and all was *peaceable and quiet*.

Thus ſhe hungred and thirſted after peace, and *after righteouneſs* too; as *the chaſed*, *wearied*, and *faint hart* after the *water brooks*, ſo her *ſoul* ſeemed to *long after righteouſneſs*; frequently *panting*, *Oh why am I not? oh how ſhall I be? oh when ſhall I be perfect, as my heavenly Father is perfect?*

And for *patient ſuffering*: Of late *ſhe* was ſeldom free from *this*, or *that* trouble; *ſpirituall afflictions*, and *ſorrows*, or *bodily infirmities*, of *weakneſs* and *ſickneſs*, or *worldly loſſes*, in *her* eſtate, one, or more of theſe, or ſuch like preſſures were conſtantly heavy upon *her*; yet little diſturbance, no *impatience* at all could be perceived in *her*; I have ſeen them all upon *her* together, and yet *her patience* triumphing over them all.

There were who thought *her* in love with ſuffering, when *ſhe* refuſed to pay *contribution money* againſt the *King*, and ſuffered

ſuffered *her ſtock of great value* to be ſeized on, rather then to pay ſome *little tax*, which was demanded: This (I ſay) was thought much; had not *carrying* the *Croſs*, when it is inevitably layd on, been enough: but thus to *meet* the *Croſs*, and *take it up*, thus forwardly to ſuffer damage, rather then *blemiſh her obedience* and *loyalty*, this was *her* practiſe; and therefore till the *King* himſelf granted an indulgence, *ſhe* patiently ſuffered whatſoever damage came upon *her*, ſtill refuſing to pay *contribution* to the *neighbouring Garriſons*, which were againſt him.

And now after the exerciſe of all theſe *virtues* in this high degree, ſuch a Poverty of *ſpirit* was apparent in *her*, as was moſt admirable: upon all occaſions *bewailing her weakneſſes*, and *lamenting her ſpirituall wants*: There were ſome about *her*, who had an *holy emulation* to be like *her*, in theſe, and ſuch like *graces* and *virtues*, and *ſhe* hath now and then overheard them, wiſhing, *that they were as forward, as* ſhe: and *her* conſtant reply was, *Oh ye are not ſo backward! yet wiſh your ſelves better*; ye *know not how vile and corrupt my heart is*: So that in ſome reſpects *ſhe* accounted *her ſelf the greateſt of ſinners*;

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in no reſpect would *ſhe* eſteem better of *her* ſelf, *then of the leaſt of Saints*; a well wiſher towards *holineſs*, and a *beginner ſtill*.

Thus *ſhe* daily practiſed theſe *graces* and *virtues*, to which our *Saviour* annexeth ſuch ſpeciall *bleſſings*; and ſtudied to be ſtil more and more perfect in them, with as much diligence, as the *Scholar* doth his *leſſon*, and with as much *ſucceſs* and good *ſpeed* too.

And from this *Sermon* of our *bleſſed Saviour*, *ſhe* learned that duty of *Prayer*; and *her* chief practiſe *therein*, *ſhe* could not conceal from us neither, which was, as follows.

Firſt, *ſhe* ſpent ſome *houres* every day in *her private devotions*, and *meditations*: and *theſe* were called, (I remember) by thoſe of *her family*, *her buſie houres*; *praiers*, *her buſineſs*; *Martha's employment*, was *her recreation*, *ſhe* had ſpare houres for it; *Maries*, was *her buſineſs*.

Then *her Maids* came into *her Chamber* early every morning, and ordinarily *ſhe* paſſed about an houre with them; In *praying*, and *catechiſing*, and *inſtructing* them; To theſe *ſecret* and *private prayers*, the *publick Morning* and *Evening* prayers of the Church, before *dinner*, and *ſupper*;

ſupper; and another *form*, (together with reading *Scriptures*, and ſinging *Pſalms*) before *bed time*, were daily and conſtantly added.

And ſo ſtrict was *ſhe* for the obſerving of theſe ſeverall *houres* of *Prayer*, that a charge was given *her ſervants* to be frequent, (if their occaſions permitted) at every of them: However, *ſhe* would not endure that any one ſhould be abſent from them all; If *ſhe* obſerved any ſuch, *ſhe* preſently ſent for them, into *her* Chamber; and *conſecrated another houre of Prayer*, there, purpoſely for them: And *ſhe* would pray with thoſe ſervants privately, ere *ſhe* went to Bed, who had not prayed publickly with *her*, that Day.

To *pray* with *David*, *ſeven* times a day, or with *Daniel three times*, is expected perhaps only from ſuch *perſons*, as have *leaſure* and *opportunity*: but with *Levi* to offer up *Morning* and *Evening ſacrifice every day*, this *ſhe* required from the buſieſt ſervant in the houſe, that at the *outgoings* of the *Morning* and *Evening*, every one ſhould *praiſe God*, and call *upon his name*.

Neither were theſe *holy offices* appropriate

priate to *her menial ſervants*, others came freely to joyn with them, and *her Oratory* was as open to *the* neighbors, as *her Hall* was.

On the *Lords day ſhe* roſe in the Morning earlier then ordinarily; yet enjoyned *her* ſelf ſo much *private duty*, with *her children* and *ſervants*, (examining them in the *Sermons*, and *Catechiſings*, &c.) and with *her* own *ſoul*, that oftentimes the *day* was *too ſhort* for *her*; and then I have known *her riſe* two or three houres *before* day, on the *Monday*, to ſupply what was left *undone*, the day before.

To diſpoſe *her* ſelf the better for the religious keeping of the *Lords day*, (as well as for other *ſpiritual* ends) I preſume it was, that *ſhe* ſo ſolemnly *faſted* every *Saturday*; *that day ſhe* ſequeſtred *her* ſelf from company, and from worldly employment, and came ſeldom out of *her Cloſet*, till towards *evening*, and then the *Chaplain* muſt *double* the *ſacrifice*; *prayers ſhe* had and *Catechiſing* both.

And the other *Holy dayes* of the *Church*, *ſhe* punctually obſerved: and when the *publick* duties were performed by the *Congregation*, on *thoſe days*, *ſhe* releaſed *her* ſervants to their *recreations*, and to their

their particular *Occaſions*; ſaying, *Theſe days are yours, and as due to you, as ordinary days to my imployments*; and I will not be unjuſt to encroach upon *your ſeverals*, by expecting any work from you.

And on theſe *Holy days ſhe* rejoyced much, at the advantage *ſhe* gained, of going to *her* poor *unlearned neighbours* with *her Book*; now their *plow* and their *wheel* (ſaid ſhe) *ſtands ſtil*: and they are at good leiſure, to hear ſome good *leſſons* read to them.

And *her* ſtrictneſs was exemplary in keeping the *Faſts* of the *Church*, and ſuch days as were appointed for *ſolemn humiliation: young* and *old. noble*, and *mean*, *free* and *bond*, in *her* family, muſt obſerve *them* duly; the *Ninivites* were *her pattern*, both for *outward* and *inward humiliation*.

And ſince our calamities increaſed upon us, *ſhe* often wiſhed, that *lawfull authority* could *vote* it fit, that not only the *ſecond Fridays*, but alſo the *laſt Wedneſdays* in every Moneth, ſhould be kept ſolemnly throughout the land; that our *Faſts* were doubled, as wel as our *troubles*.

And *her* care to prepare *her* ſelf for the receiving of the *holy Sacrament*, of *our* moſt *bleſſed Lords Supper*, was moſt com-

mendable, and moſt punctuall: oftentimes *ſcruples* and *fears* aroſe in *her*, tending to keep *her* back from that *heavenly banquet*; and *ſhe* (having, upon examination of them, reaſon enough, (as we thought) to conclude, that they were *temptations* from the *Devill*, whom *ſhe* perceived labouring amain, to deprive *her* of that *ſtrength* and *comfort*, which *ſhe* hoped to receive from that *ſacred ordinance*) neglected them all, and preſented *her* ſelf with an *humble* and *trembling heart*, at that *bleſſed Sacrament*; and theſe *fears* and *ſcruples* in *her*, occaſioned this *peremptory reſolution* from *her*, that *ſhe* would not (*by Gods help*) thenceforth *omit* any *opportunity* of *communicating*. Thus while the Devil is *undermining* to *weaken her*, *ſhe* is *countermining* to *ſtrengthen her ſelf* more againſt him; which *reſolution ſhe* conſtantly kept at *home*, and (I am told) at *Oxford*, and *London* too; The firſt inquiry almoſt after *her* journey thither, was, where, and when is there a *Communion?* and ſometimes *ſhe* would goe to the other end of the *City* for it.

At home *her* Servants were all moved to accompany *her* to the Sacrament, and they who were prevailed with, gave up

their

their names to *her*, two or three dayes before; and from thence, *ſhe* applied *her* ſelf to the inſtructing of *them*; and *ſhe* knew well, how to adminiſter to every one their particular portion; and *ſeverall* exhortations *ſhe* had for *ſeverall* perſons whom *ſhe* had power over.

Yet *ſhe* truſted not in *her* own inſtructions of them, but deſired the *Chaplains* help alſo to *examine* them, and to *inſtruct* them farther; and *her* care was ſo to order *her domeſticall occaſions*, that all thoſe *Servants*, who were to *receive* the *Sacrament*, ſhould have the *day before it* free from their *ordinary work*, that they might have better leiſure for that *ſpirituall work* of *preparing themſelves for that Sacrament*.

And after the *holy Sacrament*, *ſhe* called *them* together again, and gave them ſuch exhortations as were proper for *them*.

And this very care and *piety* in *family-duties*, was ſo highly eſteemed of in *Abraham*, that *God* made him one of his privy counceſl (as I may ſo ſay) for that alone, *Gen.* 18. 17. And might not the ſingular *wiſdom* and *deep knowledge* of *divine counſels*, and *heavenly* myſteries, which

this *daughter* of *Abraham* had, be a reward of that care to inſtruct her *Children*, and *houſhold* in the *ways* of *God?*

Yet while *ſhe* is thus religiouſly and piouſly imployed in this *good proficiency*, and far *progreſs*, going on from *grace* to *grace*, from *virtue* to *virtue*; God hath a further *deſigne* upon *her*, another *affliction* to *quicken her* yet more.

Her young and moſt *dear ſon Lorenzo* (whom God had endowed with the *choiceſt* of *natural abilities*, and to whom *her affections* were moſt *tender*, by reaſon of thoſe fair *bloſſomes* of *piety*, *ſhe* perceived in *him*) God takes away from *her*.

This added to *her* former *troubles*, of the loſs of *her Huſband*, of *her* croſſes in the *world*, and of *her ſpiritual afflictions* (wich came often upon *her*) makes the burthen moſt heavy; ſhe was bruiſed with *afflictions* before, but now ſhe fears *being ground to powder*.

Now ſhe *weeps* and *mourns* all *the day long*, *and at night* alſo *waters her couch with tears*; and *weeping*, *ſaith*, *Ah! this immoderate ſorrow muſt be repented of*, *theſe tears wept over again*: and this quick ſenſe of diſpleaſing *God*, by this deep *grief* ſoon allayed the vehemency of it. And now

ſhe

She retires *her self* to *listen what the Lord God said unto her*, in this louder *call* of *affliction*; and *she* seems to be *prompted*, that *she* was not yet *weaned* enough from the *things of this world*, and that it is expedient for *her*, that some of those worldly *comforts she* most *delighted in*, should be taken away from *her*, that *her conversation* may be yet more *spiritual*, and *heavenly*, and therefore this *affliction* seemed to call *her* to a greater *mortification* to the *world*, and to a nearer *conformation* to *Christ her Lord*.

Yet still *her* sorrow for *her Son* is somewhat exorbitant, (*she* fears) and therefore *she* goes to *her* ghostly *Physitian* again, and acquaints *him* with the violence of *those fits* of *sorrow*, which of late had seized upon *her*, for the *death of her Sonne*; and *he* with his *medicinal counsell* and direction, by Gods help, *cured* this *her distemper*; and *antidotes he* prescribed too, to *prevent* a *relaps* into this malady of *excessive grief*.

Now she confesses that this *very affliction* was most *fit* for *her*, and that it would prove most behooffull to *her*, and therefore she labours to put on *joy* instead of *sorrow*, and *comfort* in stead of *mourning*

ning, and returning home with perfect cheerfulneſſe, every one there obſerved a moſt notable though ſodain change in her; ſaid *Hanna's countenance* and *converſation* not more viſibly *changed* upon the good words of *Eli* the *Prophet* to *her*, concerning the *Samuel ſhe* ſhould *obtain*, then *hers* now is, after the *loſs* of *one*.

Thus *God* made the *medicine* moſt *ſoveraign* to *her*, and the *antidote* too; for I verily believe *ſhe* never after felt any *fit* of that her *diſeaſe*; and though *ſhe* wept often for *her tears* ſo profuſely ſpent formerly upon *her Sons hearſe*, yet after this, not a *tear* more ſhed over it.

And with this extraordinary *cheerfulneſs ſhe* takes up a moſt firm *reſolution* of a further *progreſs* in *holineſs* and *piety*, and addreſſes *her* ſelf to run theſe *latter ſtages of her Chriſtian race*, with greater ſpeed, then *ſhe* had ſhewed in any of the former: and thereupon *ſhe* begins with a moſt diligent endeavour to conform *her life exactly*, and *univerſally* to the moſt *holy will of God*.

But the *Devil*, who before envied *her beginning*, and *her proficiency* much more, is now moſt *violent* to hinder *her perfection*; and therefore upon this *her renued* purpoſe

purpaſe of more *exact obedience*, preſently *aſſaults her* with *fierceneſs* and *rage*, ſtrongly *tempting her*, to think that *ſhe* had *deceived her ſelf* all this while, and that *ſhe* had mocked God with a *counterfeit repentance*, which was no way *acceptable to him*.

And an *Argument* was brought to this purpoſe, which was ſo fully ſutable to the *tenderneſs* of *her* own *ſpirit*, that it is hard to ſay, whence it proceeded.

And this it was; my *grief* for *my ſinnes* hath not been ſo *vehement*, as that, the other day, *for the death of my Sonne*, I *wept* not ſo *bitterly* for *them*, as *I did for that*; and therefore, that my *repentance* is not *acceptable*.

And in this *anguiſh of ſpirit*, *ſhe* haſtens to *her* learned friend again, and begges *counſel* and *direction from him*, and after devout *Prayers* and holy *Conferences*, received full *comfort* and *thorow ſatisfaction*, and returns home now as *viſibly lifted* up from the *deep pit* of *anguiſh*, and *diſquiet of ſpirit*, as ſhe was the other day, from the *valley* of *ſorrow*: and with *tranquillity* of *mind*, and *joy* of *heart*, ſhews to her friends, both how ſhe ſunk, and how ſhe was raiſed again.

And now having *by the help of her God leapt over this wall*, and overcome this difficulty, with much *cheerfulneſs of ſpirit*, *ſhe* enters upon the practiſe of what *ſhe* had laſt reſolved on. This *oppoſition* though it ſtaied her a while, yet *ſet* an *edge* upon her *reſolution*, and ſhe ſoon *recovered* that *whetting* time. And *ſhe* begins by a moſt ſharp *mortification*, to obey the call of *her* laſt *Affliction*.

The vanity of *apparel* and *dreſſes ſhe* had *cut off* long before; and after *her Husbands death*, the *richneſs* of them too. Theſe (and *her looking-glaſſes with the women in the law, Exod.* 38. 8.) ſhe had laid by, for the *ſervice* of the *Tabernacle*; what *ſhe* ſpared in theſe, *ſhe* beſtowed upon the poor *Members* of *Chriſt*, and now *ſhe* begins to cut off *all worldly pomp* alſo.

In *her Houſe*, in *her Retinue*, and at *her Table*, and otherwiſe, ſhe denies *her ſelf* that *ſtate* (which *her quality* might have excuſed) that (with *Dorcas* the *Widow*) ſhe might be *full of good works*; and more *delight* ſhe takes to ſee *her Revenues* now ſpent among a crowd of *Alms-men* and *women* at *her dore*, then by a *throng* of *Servants* in *her houſe*; it was a greater *joy* to *her*, that ſhe could maintain *poor children* at

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their *Books*, and their *work*, then to have *Pages*, *and Gentle-women* for *her Attendants*: *These expences* ſhe knew would be better allowed, in *her Bill* of *Accounts*, at the *general Audit*, then thoſe other; it was *her pomp* and *joy* to *mortifie all uſeleſs pomp* of *State*, and all *delight* in *Courtly vanities*.

And now *her Anger* too (which was *cruſhed* before) muſt be wholly *ſubdued*; and to that purpoſe *ſhe* ſolicitouſly avoids *all inquiries*; and all *diſcourſe* which *ſhe* feared would provoke *her* to *immoderate anger*; and when *ſhe* feeles it ſtrugling to ariſe in *her*, then preſently (either by ſilence, or by diverting to another matter) *ſhe* labours to ſtifle it.

And while ſhe is ſuppreſſing the ſinfulneſs of *this paſſion*, ſhe undertakes alſo, that moſt difficult task of *taming* the *tongue*: And as it is neceſſary with *unruly beaſts*, ſhe begins *roughly* with it, ties it up, with a moſt ſtrong *reſolution*, and ſcarce ſuffers *it to ſpeak*, leſt ſhe ſhould *offend with her tongue*: thus for ſome while it was *ſtraightned*, and then ſhe *looſed* it a little with theſe two cautions.

Firſt, that it ſhould *never ſpeak evil of any man, though truly, but onely upon a deſigne of charity, to reclaim him from that*

evil: And because it is not ordinary to reclaim any vicious person, in his *absence*, therefore her charge is peremptory to her *tongue*, That it never should *speak evil of any man*, were he most notoriously vicious, if he were *absent* and *not like* to *be amended by it:* A strict rule this, yet verily I perswade my self, that for a long time before her *death*, *she* most punctually observed it; *she* accounted it a crime to *speak evil falsly* of any man; and it went for a *slander* with *her* (as wel it might) to *speak evil truly* of any one, unless it were in *Love*.

The second caution *her tongue* had, was that, *as much as was possible, it should keep in every idle word, and speak out only that which was to edification.*

The *Thessalonians* were famous for speaking to the *edification* one of another, 1 *Thess.* 5. 11. and this *Thessalonian language our good Lady* studied, with as much diligence and earnestness, as we ordinarily study a *deep science*, or a *gainfull mystery:* and now *she* is very *slow to speak* (as the Apostle exhorts) and, where *she cannot* rule the discourse to *edification*, *she* sits *silent, and refrains even from good words, though it be pain and grief to her.*

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And of late *she* distinguisht between *civil*, and *spiritual edification*, and scarcely allowed *her* self *discourses* for *civil edification* of *her* friends, or neighbors in worldly matters: *Spirituall edification in heavenly things* was all *her* aim.

And her *care* was the same in *writing*, as in *speaking*; not a *vain*, not an *idle word* must slip from *her pen*: *she* thought not *her soul clean*, if there were such a *blot* in *her paper*. In *her Letters*, no savour of complement at all, and *she* judged *her self* guilty of a *trespass*, if *she* subscribed *her self*, *Your servant*, to whom *she* was not really *so*.

And for that other *temperance* in *diet*, as well as in *speech*, *she* was very eminent. A *small dosis*, of *meat or drink*, and of *sleep*, and *ease*, sufficed *her*.

In *fastings often*, in *watching often*; and *temperate* she was, in an high degree, *continually*. And these were sure means for the *mortification* of *her appetites*: and as far from *daintiness* as from *intemperance*, and both that, and this, not only in a *care* of *her health*, and in respect of *Gods commandement*, but also out of a *Consciousnesse* (as *she* would now and then intimate) that *she* was unworthy to enjoy any thing, for *quantity* or *quality*, above the *meanest* in the *Parish*.

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And together with theſe *mortifications* of *her affections* to *honour* and *ſtate*; and of *her appetites*; She now alſo ſeverely undertakes the *mortification* of *her natural Affection* to *her Children* and *Friends*, and keeps that from its wonted exorbitancy: It ſounded very harſhly, to ſome of *her* deareſt friends, when ſhe ſaid, *Oh love me not I pray too much!* untill ſhe added, *and God grant, I never love my friends too much hereafter, that hath coſt me dear, and my heart hath ſmarted ſore with grief for it already*: And now *her will* and *underſtanding* muſt be henceforth more *mortified* then formerly; *ſhe* had reſigned them before to *Gods will*, and ſhe renues that *reſignation* daily, and moſt freely ſubmits *her ſelf* in every thing, not only to *Gods will*, but alſo to his *wiſdom*: And whatſoever comes upon *me* (ſaid ſhe) *I will bear it patiently, becauſe by Gods will it comes*; *yea, I will bear it cheerfully, becauſe by Gods wiſdome it is thus ordered, and it will work (as all things elſe) for mine advantage.*

And upon this reaſon ſhe was wont to account the *death of her Husband*, and *of her Son as extraordinary perquiſits and advantages to her*; and *therefore I ſhould offend not onely againſt free obedience and ſubmiſſion,*

miſſion, but *alſo againſt common prudence* (ſaid ſhe) *if I ſhould wiſh my condition otherwiſe, then now it is; I cannot wiſh any thing ſo gainfull and proſperous to me, as this, which my heavenly Father in his wiſdom hath ordered for me.*

And as in *ſuffering*, *ſo in doing*, ſhe *reſigns* up *her* ſelf wholly, and reſolves (by *the grace of God*) *to do whatſoever is her duty* in every thing; and therefore ſhe propoſes henceforth to *deliberate* of *nothing*, but what is her duty, in this, or that particular; and without further pauſe goe about it.

When matters of difficulty came, ſhe uſually conſulted with the moſt *learned* and *pious Divines* ſhe could meet with, to learn what was *her duty therein*; ſhe truſted not *her own* judgement, nor *miſtruſted theirs*; but preſently applyed *her* ſelf to do, as *they* directed *her*.

In the Tranſactions of worldly affaires, though ſhe foreſaw ſometimes inconveniences enſuing by following their *directions*, yet more *ſhe* feared might *otherwiſe* happen, and therefore *ſhe* would not neglect them. And when the ſucceſs of any buſineſs anſwered not to *her* expectation, *ſhe* ſeemed not troubled at it; *her Conſcience*

ſcience bearing *her witneſs*, that *ſhe* had done what was *her duty* to doe; and ſeeing it was *God*, who in his *wiſedom* denied *her* ſucceſſe, *ſhe* would ſtil *hope*, and *ſay*, Though at *this time, this way, this buſineſs proſpered not, yet at ſome other time, ſome other way, it will be ſucceſsfull unto me. This doing my duty will be ſome time, or other, ſome way or other, for mine advantage.*

And theſe *her mortifications* were not without a great degree of *Sanctification*, both in the *inward* and *outward* man; for to theſe *ſhe* joyned *her* former purpoſe of adorning *her ſoul* more *ſpecionſly* with thoſe *virtues* which *our Saviour* commends, in his *Sermon on the Mount*; and now *ſhe* endeavours to put them in practice, more *perfectly*, and more *exactly* then formerly *ſhe* had done.

And firſt, *mercifulneſs* begins to *exceed*: *ſhe* was moſt *liberal* before, now *ſhe* is (conſidering *her* Eſtate, brought into a very narrow compaſs) *moſt bountifull*: for whereas before the *main* of *her Revenue* was *for her own maintenance*, the *ſuperfluity* of *it* for *her charity*, now the *main of her Revennes goes abroad for Charity*; the *other only* is *left at home for her maintenance*: I have heard *her* compute, and the remain-

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der after ſuch and ſuch deeds of *Charity* to be expended quarterly, that ſmall pittance was only it *ſhe* accounted *hers*, and ordered *her* courſe of life accordingly; very well content, though *ſhe her ſelf* made a *ſhift with Agurs ſingle food*, and *rayment*, *Prov.* 30. 8. that others, who depended on *her*, ſhould (as the houſhold of *Lemuels virtuous woman*) *be fed, and cloathed with double*, c. 31. 21.

And with this, *her meekneſs exceeds* alſo: *meekneſs* was the *attire* of *her ſoul*, before, now it is the *Ornament* thereof: hath the *fulneſs*, and *length*, and *comlineſs* too, of an *Ornament* or *Robe*: And I will ſay nothing (for I cannot ſay enough) of the *richneſs*, and *glory*, and *beauty* of *that Robe*, a *meek and quiet Spirit*: now *ſhe* growes a moſt eminent pattern of *meekneſs* and *gentleneſs* in every kind, and all that knew *her* admired and reverenced *her* for it.

And *her Compaſſions* which was thought to be with the deepeſt before, goes deeper now; ſhe had formerly the *bowels* of a moſt tender *Mother*, towards every one in diſtreſſe, now ſhe put on the *bowels of God*; and ſo enlarged ſhe grows in her *bowels*, that ſhe ſeldome ſees, or heares of

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any object of pity, but they *yearn* ſo much within *her*, as to force tears from *her eyes*; And it is hard to ſay, whether *her Bowels*, or *her Hand*, (*her Compaſſion*, or *her Charity*) contributed moſt to the *comfort* of the *poor* and *needy*.

This was confined, *that* at large; and the publique Calamities which *her Hand* of *Charity* could not reach, *her Bowels* of *Compaſſion* did; And we, who obſerved *her* (when the publique and general miſeries of the Kingdome and Church were the Diſcourſe at Meales) to mingle *her Drink with her Tears*, cannot but think, that the ſadder thoughts of *them*, in private, made *her water her Couch with her Tears*.

And now ſhe is almoſt pined with *hunger*, and *faint with thirſt after righteouſneſs*; ever and anon ſighing, *Oh that I could attain unto it! Oh that my ways were made ſo direct!* It was uſuall with *her* at night to compoſe *her* ſelf to ſleep, ſaying to *her woman* (not without ſome joy) *well, now I am one day neerer my journies end*; comforting *her* ſelf, that when *her body* ſhould *ſleep* in the *bed* of *her grave*, then the days of *ſin* ſhould be accompliſhed, and then *ſhe* ſhould be *perfect, as her heavenly Father is perfect*.

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Particularly, *her hunger and thirſt after juſtice* was moſt commendable, *that judgement might run down as a ſtream, and righteouſneſs like a mighty river:* And for *juſtice* in *her* own *affairs*, there lives not (I believe) any *one*, more punctual and exact then *ſhe was*. *She* peruſed a *learned and ſtrict Treatiſe of juſtice*, and made *thoſe rules her ſtandard*, practiſing them moſt preciſely: And in more perplexed and difficult caſes *ſhe* would ſend to ſome *Divines* (of whoſe *piety* and *fervour ſhe* had a good opinion) and deſire them to pray (as *ſhe her ſelf* did) that *ſhe* might be moſt juſt in *them*, neither ſwerving to the *left*, nor to the *right hand*.

In *her* abſence from home, the *Sutlers* of the *Army* came to *her Houſe*, and took *proviſion*, paying for every particular the higheſt *price*; which, when *her Servant* accounted to *her* again, *ſhe* computed exactly, what the particulars coſt *her*; and then ſent ſolicitouſly up and down the *Army* to find out the *Sutlers*, and to *reſtore* the *overplus*, which *ſhe* thought not *juſt* to be taken by *her*: and *her hunger* and *thirſt after that juſtice* was not *ſatisfied*, till *ſhe* heard it was *ſo* done.

And for engagements deſcended to *her* (after

(after *care* taken to ſatisfie them with all poſſible ſpeed) *ſhe* lamented often with tears that *ſhe* could not actually diſcharge them, ſaying, *though they may conſiſt with juſtice, 2 King. 4. 1. yet they could not conſiſt with that outward thankfulneſs, which ſhe deſired to expreſs.*

And for the other points of *our Saviors Sermon, her charity ſuſpected* few, *judged* none of *neighbors*; an *Eagles eye ſhe* had, to eſpie any *good*, though but *inclinations* in them, and with a favorable conſtruction, *judged* the *beſt* of what *ſhe* heard, or *ſaw* in them: yet a *Moles eye*, to eſpy the *evil*, though *acts* in *her* brethren; a *mote* of *goodneſs* could not eſcape *her ſight*; but it muſt be a *beam* of *evil, her eye* would take notice of: and *her* ſlowneſs to believe miſcarriages in any one, drave all *tal-bearers from her:* yet when *faults* were *evident* (in ſuch as *ſhe* had charge over) *ſhe* would reprove with a great deal of power.

She was moſt *reſpective* to *her ſuperiors*; and *moſt courteous* and *affable* towards *inferiors*; And very cautious leſt *ſhe* ſhould *give* offence to *one*, or *other*, either in *word* or *geſture*; and as *cautious* too, leſt any of them ſhould *take offence* at any *ſpeech*, or *look* of hers, towards them; for either way

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(said she) *in offences given, or taken, God is offended*; And *her humility* in *begging forgiveness* from others, was most singular: of late, *your Ladyship* knowes, *she* seldom slept, til *she* had asked *forgiveness* as well as *blessing* from you; if *she* had *offended* you, *she* thought your *pardon necessary*; if not, it was no cumbrance, to have *supernumerary pardons* from you, lying by *her*.

But to see this *honourable Lady* begging *forgiveness* from *her inferiors*, and *servants* (as *she* often did) for *her angry words* to them, or *her chiding frowns* upon them, was that, which put us all to shame, and to astonishment, now and then, when *she* had expressed no *anger*, *outwardly*, yet their pardon *she* would desire, *because*, said she, *somewhat I felt within my self, too like anger against you, though I suppressed it assoon as I could.*

More then once, or twice of late, *she brought her* gift *to the Altar* (was in *her Closet* upon *her* knees towards *Prayer*) and there *she remembred*, that *her Brother might possibly have somewhat against her*, (for such a word, or such a look, or a neglective silence a little before) and *she left her gift at the Altar, and went, and was reconciled*, (asked pardon) and then came

and

and offered: ſo that *her* chief care was ſtill, to *lift up in Prayer pure hands, without wrath*; If there were any wrath in *her* againſt *others*, or any, *in others againſt her*, *ſhe* would have it allayed, before *ſhe offered her gift of Prayer.*

And though all theſe *graces* and *virtues* (by Gods help) did thus *increaſe* in *her*, yet a true *poverty* of *ſpirit encreaſed* alſo in *her*. The more *holy*, the more *pious ſhe* was, the more *humbly ſhe walked with God:* In *her* greateſt *abundance* ſhe complained moſt of *ſpiritual wants*. Sure the bright *luſtre* of *her* virtue gave *her* an advantage, to *eſpie* many corruptions in *her ſelf*, which *ſhe* could not before; and theſe *ſhe* lamented more ſadly now, then hereofore.

And in theſe *duties of prayer*, *ſhe* advanced forward too. Now, her Nurſery muſt have an *Oratory* annexed to it; and *her Children* their *private Devotions*; they are appointed by *her*, to read *Morning* and *Evening Prayers*, and *Leſſons* at their *riſing* up, and at their *lying* down: and their ſpare minutes being deſtined as *hers* alſo were to *conning of Pſalms without book*; they open the day with one of the ſeven *Euchariſtical* Pſalms (for thankſgiving to God, for *renuing his loving kindnes*

to them that Morning) and they *ſhut* up the *day*, with one of the 7 *Penitential Pſalms* (praying for pardon of the offences of the day) this care ſhe took to ſeaſon her Childrens affections, and *memories* with good things; and now ſhe trains them up alſo, to thoſe *virtues* commended in our *Saviours Sermon*, and an explication of *them*, *ſhe* directs, ſhould be annexed to their firſt *Catechiſm*.

And for the *Church prayers* in *her houſe*, there was of late ſome *exceptions* againſt continuing that practice; and ſome danger the *Exceptors* apprehended, likely to have enſued upon it: Hereupon *the Book* of *Martyrs* was brought, and the ſtory of the *Lady Knevit in Norfolk*, in the time of *Queen Mary* was publickly read, which in ſhort is this.

" A perſecuted Proteſtant Miniſter, be-
" ing in her houſe, reads the Morning and
" the Evening prayer, of King *Edward* the
" ſixt his Service-book (the ſame with our
" Service-book) conſtantly in her family,
" though there were an Act of Parliament
" againſt it. Hereupon the holy Lady is
" threatned to be puniſhed for it; ſhe
" goes on notwithſtanding, in that courſe
" of piety, promiſing to welcome the pu-
" niſhment,

"niſhment, when ere it came: And though "many reſorted to her houſe, who had "diſaffection enough to her piety, and "particularly to that Form of prayer, yet "they commonly kneeled down, and joy-"ned in prayers with her; God would not "ſuffer their hands to puniſh, nor their "mouths to ſpeak againſt her, for it.

And now, when *every paſſage* in this ſtory was ſo readily *appliable*, to this our *pious Lady* alſo, *ſhe* wanted not an *anſwer* for the *Objectors*, nor *courage* to goe on in *her* wonted courſe: and the *event* was moſt particularly *according* to the *preſident*; for though *complaints* were made, and *threats ſent* to us, and many quartered upon *her*, who *liked not our Form of Prayer*, and had power *to ſuppreſs it*, yet *God ſuffered them not to execute that their power upon us*. And, *Madam*, if the *Lady Knevit* was thought fit to be Chronicled (amongſt the Martyrs and Confeſſors) for this alone, I pray let not this of our Lady be forgotten: And I ſhall preſume that your Ladyſhip, and every one who conſiders theſe, and ſuch like examples, will hazard any thing, rather then alter your courſe of piety, and conſtant uſe of our ſacred *Liturgy*.

And *ſhe* was as *conſtant*, and as *reſolute* for

for her other houres of Prayers and Meditation. The entertainments of honourable perſons, or the haſte of neceſſary buſineſs, ſhould not excuſe *her* from theſe other *Devotions*; In *her* deepeſt *griefs* and diſturbances, in *her* higheſt *comforts*, and gratulations, *ſhe* was moſt conſtant at them: and though *ſhe* could not, at theſe times, diſcharge thoſe duties at *her ordinary houres*, yet *her eyes* were not *ſuffered to ſleep*, till *ſhe* had gone through with *them*; when *ſhe* muſt loſe *her* ſleep, or *God this his ſervice*, *ſhe* readily reſolved, which was *fitteſt* of the *two*.

Her laſt work, every *Evening*, was to *review* with ſome diligence all the works of that *day*, *her thoughts*, *words*, and *deeds*; what in this room, what in that; what in this company, what in that; what *good ſhe* had *done*, what *evil ſhe* had *committed*; what *opportunities* of *benefiting* others, *ſhe* had *embraced*, or *neglected*; and what *comforts* and *bleſſings ſhe* had that *day received*: and after this *examination*, giving *thanks*, and begging *pardon*, in every particular, as occaſion required, having *communed with her own heart, in her bed-chamber*, *ſhe* was *ſtill*.

Thus *ſhe* was a very good *proficient* in theſe ſeverall *points* of our *Saviours Ser-*

mon,

mon, went on from one degree to another, in moſt of them. *Faith*, and *judgement* (the weighty *matters* of the law, the chief virtues) *ſhe* was moſt eminent in; and for *tything of mint and cummin* (the leſſer *virtues*) *ſhe would not leave them undone*.

She thought not all the *laws* of *God* performed, if any laws of the King were neglected; and therefore *ſhe* was wont earneſtly to preſſe *obedience* to *all things*, which the *laws* of the *Realm require*; even to *penal laws* againſt *ſhooting* and *hunting*, and the like; and would not ſuffer any of *hers* to tranſgreſſe, in theſe leſſer matters: Severely (though judiciouſly, and truly enough) affirming, *That the Law-givers made their penal laws, for obedience, not or Mulct; and their firſt and chief intention was, that their laws ſhould be obſerved, not that the offender ſhould be puniſhed.*

And having thus far improved *herſelf* (by the grace of God) in an *holy* and *ſpirituall life*, ſhe now labours what ſhe can, to *improve others* alſo; and now ſhe is *ſtrong*, to *ſtrengthen her brethren*.

A Covenant ſhe enters with *her acquaintance*, eſpecially *thoſe* with whom ſhe *frequently* converſed, *that they ſhould take liberty to reprove whatſoever they ſaw amiſſe*

in

in her : and alſo to give her liberty to deal ſo with them; ſaying to them, *there is no friendſhip without this*; *& if you ſuffer me to be undone for ever , or I you ; how are we friends?*

There was neer *acquaintance* between *her*, and ſome ſtrict *Papiſts*, and as near between *her*, & ſome ſtricter *Non-conformiſts*; and ſhe not onely warily avoyded the *Superſtition* of the *One*, and the *Non-conformity* of the *Other*, but alſo earneſtly laboured to reduce the *One* and the *Other* from their Erroneous wayes ; And not without happy Succeſſe, I could inſtance in ſome (and perhaps your Ladyſhip can inſtance in more) who now are firm to the *Tenents* and *Practices* of our *Church* of *England*, whom ſhe (principally) by *her* Arguments and endeavours gained from *Rome* , and from *Geneva*.

But for improving *her* nearer *Acquaintance* it was *her* conſtant Labour.

That counſel which *ſhe* gave to *young Mothers*, not to be *fond* of their *Children*, or *Husbands*, came moſt *properly*, and *moſt pathetically* from *her*. *Oh, I have had my portion* (ſaid *ſhe*) *of theſe very comforts, with the firſt ; no one woman more* ; but there is no *laſting* nor *true pleaſure* in *them* : There is no real *comfort* from any

eſpouſals, but from thoſe to *Chriſt*; this (I ſay) came moſt fitly from *her*, here *ſhe* had *tripped* once, and again, and now *ſhe* forewarns others of the dangers, leſt *they* ſhould *ſtumble* at *it*.

The benefit *ſhe* had received from *her* childhood, by *pious* and *learned Divines*, makes *her* ſolicitous to provide ſuch for *her neighbours*; and till *they* were acquainted (as well as *ſhe*) with the *converſations* of the *people*, *ſhe* would, ſome way or other, hint unto them, what *virtues* it would be proper to commend in their Sermons, and *diſcourſes* to the *Pariſh*: and for *catechizing* the *young*, and for *viſiting* the *ſick*, *ſhe her ſelf* took a ſpecial regard, as if the *cure* had depended more upon the *Patroneſs*, then upon her *Clerk*.

And the remembrance of thoſe *heavenly comforts*, ſhe frequently had, while ſhe *plaid upon Davids harp*, ſet *her* on to commend *thoſe Pſalms*, for *daily* and *hourly devotions to all*.

Yet ſome *diſcord* ſhe found of late, even from that *harp*; obſerving ſuch *Pſalms* of *David*, wherein he (by his Prophetical *ſpirit*, or in *zeal* for *divine juſtice*, upon the *publicke enemies* of *God*) pronounces *curſes*, ſpitefully picked out, and maliciouſly applyed,

applyed, both in *private families*, and publick Congregations to our own *enemies*; This ſhe often lamented as a moſt notorious *profanation* of this holy *Book of Pſalms*, and as an evident *breach of charity:* Oh that ſweeteſt harp founds moſt harſhly, unleſs it be touched with pure hands, without wrath! Therefore (ſaid ſhe) the *people muſt be often warned* (*in theſe days of contention, and oppoſition*) *to ſing* Davids *Pſalms, with* Davids *ſpirit:* And when *curſing of enemies* came in, to reflect (as *David* oft did) upon the *luſts* and *corruption* of *our hearts*; and then the 109. *Pſalm*, (a common *curſe* among the *Hebrews*) be upon *thoſe* our *vileſt enemies*, and moſt deadly foes, little enough.

Neither was *her* care of *improving* others, confined to the preſent *age*; *deſignes* and *projects* ſhe had alſo *for poſterity*; of ſetting up ſchooles, and *manufacture trades* in the *Pariſh*; to ſhut out (by thoſe engines) for ever, *ignorance*, *idleneſs*, and *want*.

But that *magnificent*, and moſt *religious contrivement*, that there might be *places* for the *education* of *young Gentlewomen*, and for retirement of *Widows*, (as *Colleges* and the *Inns of Court* and *Chancery* are for *men*) in ſeveral *parts* of the *Kingdom*.

This was much in *her thoughts*; hoping thereby that *learning* and *religion* might flouriſh more in *her own Sex*, then heretofore, having ſuch opportunities to *ſerve* the *Lord without diſtraction*: A *project* this *adequat* to the *wiſdom*, and *piety* of this *Mother* in *Iſrael*; and not beyond the *power*, and *intereſt*, ſhe had with great ones, to have effected it.

But theſe *evil times* diſabled *her* quite, and diſcouraged *her* ſomewhat, from attempting much, in theſe *her deſignes*, ſhe returnes therefore to *improve her ſelf* with the greater *vigor*; If *her virtue* cannot *ſhine* out over all the Kingdom, it ſhall *ſhine* and *burn* ſo much the *more within her own ſoul*; and now ſhe grows ſo ſtrict to *her ſelf*, and ſo ſevere in examining *her own heart*, that, with *holy ſhe fears all her workes*: *She* had *alway a tender conſcience*; but now that exceeds too, in *quickneſs*, and *tenderneſs*; and this *holy fear* began at laſt to breed in *her* many *doubtings* and *ſcruples* (which occaſioned the laſt of theſe adjoyning Letters) and in theſe *doubtings* and *fears*, *ſhe* ſeldom truſted *her* own *judgement*, but adviſed with *learned Divines*; and when *ſhe* met with any *one* of *learning* and *piety*, *ſhe* propoſes *her Caſes*, and *ſeekes Reſolves*.

And

And upon theſe *fears ſhe* would *diſpute againſt her ſelf* very *ſharply*; ſcarce *omitting* any *objection* material, nor *accepting* any *anſwer*, which was not *fully ſatisfactory*; and when *ſhe* was once clearly *reſolved*, *ſhe* cheerfully *ſubmitted*, and ordered *her* future *practice* accordingly.

And it is very obſervable, how this *holy fear*, (as *her* other *virtues*) extended it ſelf alſo, not only to greater *matters*, but alſo to *leſſer*, almoſt to *all*: ſuch was *her love to God*, and *her reverential aw* of his *Majeſty*, that *ſhe* feared to offend *him*, in the *leaſt* particular: *If it be but a mote, may it not grow* (ſaid ſhe) *to a beam in mine eye?*

And ſuch zealous *Anxieties*, as theſe, ſuch *holy fears* of diſpleaſing *God* in *any* the *leaſt* thing, are ſtrong *arguments* of moſt *ardent love* to *God*; and of moſt *paſſionate deſires* to pleaſe *him*; Oh how greedily did *ſhe aſpire* after *perfection*, while *ſhe* thus *ſolicitouſly fears* the *leaſt imperfection!*

And if ſome of theſe *Scruples* proceeded from her own *carnal Reaſon*, or from *Satan* (to diſquiet, and diſturbe her) yet even that *Poyſon ſhe* turned into *Honey*, taking ocaſion from thoſe very *Scruples*, to be more *exact* afterward in *her Life*.

And now in the very laſt *ſtage* of *her Chriſtian* race, *ſhe* growes ſo *exact*, that *all time* ſeems *tedious* to *her*, which tends not to *Heaven*; and thereupon ſhe now reſolves, to get looſe from the multitude of *her worldly employments*; *and provides to remove from her ſtately manſion*, to a *little houſe* neer adjoyning; and in that *houſe* and *garden*, with a *book*, and a *wheel*, and a *maid* or two, to retire *her ſelf* from *worldly buſineſs*, and *unneceſſary viſits*, and ſo ſpend *her* whole *time*: and *ſhe* took as great delight in *projecting* this *humiliation* and *privacy*, as others doe, in being advanced to *publick honours, and State employments*.

Now toward the end of *her race*, all *her ſtrength* ſeemes *weakneſs*, and *her quickeſt ſpeed* ſeemes *ſlothfulneſs*; Therefore at *Chriſtmas laſt*, *ſhe* prepared to be at the holy *Communion*, with the firſt; and after that, *her* ſoul ſtill wanting the *ſtrength* and *vigor* it aimed at, *ſhe* thinks of coming with the laſt too, the next Lords day: But he, who hath let, will let; for that very *morning ſhe* had a very ſore *conflict*, and great *anguiſh* in *ſpirit*: one while *her unworthineſs*, another while *her dulneſs*, and *drineſs* deterred *her* from approaching to the *holy Sacrament*; and then the *ſingularity*

rity and *unaccuſtomedneſs* of receiving *ſo often*, diſſwaded *her*; after an *houre* or *two*, ſome reaſon *ſhe* found to preſume this might be from the *Devil*, *her grand enemy*; (who was unwilling that the *Caſtle* which he now *beſieged*, ſhould be *double-walled* againſt *him*) and thereupon *ſhe* continues *her* reſolution, and came to the *bleſſed Sacrament*, that ſecond day alſo, and received with it much *comfort* and *peace*. And not many dayes after, the Devill brought his ſtrongeſt batteries and labour'd to take this caſtle by ſtorm; *Temptations again ſhe had*, and thoſe *vehement* and *fierce*, to *ſuſpect her* whole courſe of *life*, as ſo full of *weakneſs* at beſt, and oftentimes ſo full of *groſs corruptions*; *Her faith* ſo *weak*, *her repentance* ſo *faint*, that *God* would not *accept* of *her*: But *her ſhield of Faith* in *Chriſts merits*, ſoon repelled *theſe darts*, and *her wonted Sanctuary* of *prayer* ſecured *her* preſently from *this* ſtorm of *temptation*.

And in *peace* and *tranquillity* of *minde*, *her piety*, and *zeal* of *Juſtice*, hurry *her* to *London* (in the bittereſt ſeaſon of this winter) to take order for the diſcharge of ſome *engagements*: this *ſhe* knew was *her duty*, and that *ſhe her ſelf* ſhould take that *journey*, was conceived the *neceſſary* means to per-

form *that duty*, and therefore *ſhe* ventures upon it, and leaves the *ſucceſs* to *God*.

There, at *London*, *ſhe* ſtrengthens *her ſelf* yet more, for the *final period* of *her race*, by receiving the *holy Sacrament* again: But alas, Madam, though *her inward ſtrength encreaſes*, *her outward ſtrength decays*, and *her weak conſumptive body*, by a *cold* there *taken*, grows *weaker*: yet thence *ſhe* came homeward, and at *Oxford*, *her cough* and *cold* very much *encreaſing*, *ſhe* with moſt *earneſt Prayers*, and holy *meditations* (which a *pious* and *learned Divine* ſuggeſted to *her*) prepares *her ſelf* for *death*.

After a while, they, who were about *her* fearing the *pangs* of *death* to be upon *her*, began to *weep* and *lament*; the whole company grew ſad and heavy; *ſhe* only continued in *her* former *condition*, not at all *ſorrowfull*, nor *affrighted* by *theſe meſſengers* of *death*: Then the Phyſitian coming, and upon conſideration, ſaying, *Here is no ſigne of death, nor of much danger*; *by Gods help ſhe may recover again*; the whole company was very much *comforted*, and *cheared*; *ſhe* onely in *her* former *indifferency*; no *alteration* at all could be perceived in *her*, as if *ſhe* had been the only *party* in the chamber, unconcerned in *it*; neither fear of *death* could

grieve

grieve, nor *trouble her*, nor *hopes* of life and *health rejoyce her*; *I have wholly reſigned up my ſelf to God* (ſaid *ſhe*) and *not mine, but his will be done, whether in life* or *death*: She was not *afraid* to *live*, and ſtill endure *the miſeries* of this life (and ever and anon *encounter* with *Satan* too) becauſe *ſhe had a powerfull God* able to *uphold her*: nor yet *afraid* to *die*, and appear at Gods *Judgement ſeat*, becauſe *ſhe* had a *mercifull Redeemer*, willing to *ſave her*.

They who write of *perfection*, account it an high degree, to have *Vitam in patientiâ & mortem in voto, to be content to live, but deſirous to die*: yet ſurely, this here, *In æquilibrio ad vitam, & ad mortem, to be wholly indifferent, and to be moſt equally enclined to either, to deſire nothing, to fear nothing, but wholly to reſigne our ſelves to God, accounting that to be the beſt (whatſoever it is) which he pleaſes to ſend, This, this is to be a ſtrong man in Chriſt*; And this in our moſt pious *Lady* was a very neer approach unto *perfection*.

It was related for a very great *virtue* in S. *Cyprian*, that, *Maluit obſequi præceptis Chriſti, quàm vel ſic coronari*, He had rather *live* and *obey* God, then *die* and *reign in glory*: But this, to have no *propenſion*

at all *more* to *one*, then to the *other*, to be wholly *indifferent*, to *work* on ſtill in *Gods Vineyard*, or to be *called* up to *Heaven*, to receive *pay*, this may be a *greater virtue*: And this perfect *indifference* to doe, or ſuffer *Gods will*, in *life*, or *death*, appearing in this ſervant of *God*, was ſuch an *act* of *ſelf-denial*, which they, who obſerved it in *her*, could not but ſet a ſpecial *character* upon, moſt worthy to be commended to your *Ladyſhip*.

Thus *ſhe* was brought from *Oxford*, *home*, and now being far ſpent, and near *her end*, *ſhe* could ſpeak little, yet expreſſed a great deal of *thankefulneſs* to *God*, who had brought *her* ſafe, to die in *her* own *houſe*, among *her deareſt Friends*.

And there *ſhe* ſhewed thoſe friends a rare *pattern* of patience in the extremity of *her ſickneſs*.

But the *tranquillity* of *minde*, which *ſhe* had in *theſe her laſt dayes*, was moſt obſervable; That the *Devil*, who had ſo often *perplexed her* with violent *temptations*, ſhould now leave *her* to *reſt* and *eaſe*: *ſhe* was wont to fear *his moſt violent aſſaults* on *her death bed*, (as *his* practiſe commonly is) but now *God* (it ſeems) had chained him up, and enabled *her* (by *his grace*) *to tread*

Satan

ſatan under her feet: not a word of *complaint* nor the leaſt *diſturbance*, or *diſquiet*, to be perceived by *her*, which is a ſufficient argument to us, (who knew how *open a breaſt ſhe had*, to reveal any thing in that kinde, eſpecially to *Divines*, whereof *ſhe* had now *ſtore* about *her*) of *her* exceeding *great quietneſs*, and *peace*: and this *tranquillity* of *mind*, more clearly now appearing at *her death*, then ordinarily in the time *of her health*, is a great evidence, to me, of *Gods* moſt *tender mercy* and *love* towards *her*, and of ſome good *aſſurance*, in *her*, of *her ſalvation*.

This *quiet* gave *her* leave, though now very *faint* and *weak*, to be moſt *vigorous*, and moſt *inſtant* at *prayers*; *ſhe* cals for other *help*, very *faintly*; but for *prayers*, moſt *heartily* and *often* (in thoſe few hours *ſhe* lived at home:) and after the *office* of the *Morning* was performed, *ſhe* gave ſtrict charge, that every one of *her family* (who could be ſpared from *her*) ſhould goe to *Church* and *pray* for *her*; and then in a word of *exhortation* to *them*, who ſtayed by *her*, ſaying, *Fear God, fear God*, *ſhe* moſt ſweetly ſpent *her laſt breath*; and ſo moſt *comfortably* yielded up *her ſpirit* to *him* who made *it*: and was (we doubt not) admitted

mitted into Heaven, into the *number* of the *Apoſtles* and *Saints* of God (on S. *Matthias-day*) there to reign in the glory of God for evermore.

In which moment of *her death*, there ſeemed as little *outward pain*, as *inward conflict*; none could perceive either *twitch*, or *groan*, or *gaſp*, or *ſigh*, onely *her ſpirits failed*; and ſo *ſhe vaniſhed* from us, as if *God* had intended *her here*, ſome *fore-taſt*, not onely of the *reſt* of the *ſoul*, but alſo of the *eaſe* of the *body*, which *ſhe* ſhould enjoy *hereafter* in *Heaven*.

Thus in *her youth*, *ſhe* was *ſoon perfected*, and in a *ſhort time* of five and thirty years, *ſhe fulfilled a long time*.

And having in a moſt acceptable manner practiſed the *duties* of our *moſt bleſſed Saviours Sermon*, *ſhe* is now (we firmly believe) partaker of the *bleſſedneſs* too of that *Sermon*; through *Chriſts mercy*, *ſhe* hath obtained *mercy*, and *enjoyes* the *viſion* of *God*, in the *Kingdom* of *Heaven*, where *ſhe* is moſt fully ſatisfied with *delight*, and *comfort*, and *joy*.

There were *theſe*, and many *other virtues your Ladyſhip* knows, obſervable in *this your* moſt *pious* Daughter; but I pretend not to relate all, many I omit, be-

cauſe

cauſe *common* to all the *ſervants of God*; and many other *excellencies* alſo there were in *her*, (I doubt not) which *ſhe* concealed from *her* neareſt friends; and indeed, many of *theſe*, I have named, *ſhe* endeavoured ſtudiouſly to conceal from *us*, but now, and then, unawares, *ſhe* diſcovered them, and ſo I came acquainted with *them*.

And now, *Madam*, you have obſerved, that the *growth* of *grace*, which was moſt evident, and apparent in *her*, eſpecially theſe late yeares (as of *corn* from a *blade* to an *ear*, then to a *bloſſome*, and thence towards full *maturity* and *ripeneſs*) was moſt of all promoted, by the *afflictions*, which *God* ſent upon *her*; the loſs of *her* deareſt *friends*, and other *troubles*, were as a *ſhower* of *rain*, to a *crop* of *corn*, on a *dry ground*; an evident *benefit*, and a preſent *improvement* by it.

And was there not then ſomewhat *extraordinary* in that *dream* of *hers*, ſoon after *her Sons death*? wherein *ſhe* being much *troubled* for that *loſs*, *a ladder preſently appeared*, *reaching* (*with that Ladder in* Jacobs *dream*) *from earth to heaven*; after the *death* of *her Son*, every one of us could ſenſibly perceive her *climbing* up *higher*, *and higher every day*, in *piety*, and *holineſs*, till

till *God* exalted *her*, to the *top* of *Jacobs ladder*, the *height* of *glory* in *heaven*.

So it may be, with every one, who ſuffers *inward*, or *outward affliction*.

And now, though all this while, I have been *comforting your Ladyſhip*, and wiping the *tears* from *your eyes*, yet I have detained you too long (I fear) from *improving this affliction* ſent upon you (the loſs of *your deareſt child*) with that *haſt* and *greedineſs* you deſired, to your *ſpiritual benefit*: I ſhall help you what I can hereafter, by begging in my *prayers* the *ſtrengthning*, and *eſtabliſhing grace of God*, for *you*, to bring *ſtore* of *heavenly comfort* into your *ſoul*, from *this your* preſent *ſorrow*.

Your ſervant in

April 15. 1647.

Chriſt Jeſus,

I. D.

By

By another Author, who acknowledgeth much good received by this holy Life.

YEe who in reading of this *holy Life*, ſhall have ſuch thoughts as theſe.

1. Surely this is but a Romance, or an Idea drawn (Painter-like) better then the Life, by a flattering Chaplain.

Or ſecondly, (if true) ſurely ſalvation and everlaſting glory are procurable at a much eaſier rate; for who hath required at our hands, ſo much praying, and faſting, ſo much denying our ſelves the good things and comforts of this life, ſo much almes?

Or thirdly, did not Chriſt come to take away the rigor of the law? and hath performed all theſe things for us? is not this to goe about to eſtabliſh our own righteouſneſs?

Or fourthly, that theſe Rules turn the free grace of God, and ſecret operations of his Spirit into humains obſervances.

For the firſt, aſſure thy ſelf, that the author was a learned godly man, one that perfectly hated a lye, and that he is known by

by divers perſons of worth yet living (who knew her) to have kept his pen in this relation within the confines of truth, and to have faine much ſhort in the ſetting out the vertues and excellencies of this pretious ſoul.

And for the reſt, be pleaſed to withdraw into thy chamber, and to meditate ſeriouſly (as in a buſineſs of life and death) on theſe places of Scripture.

Pſal. 55.17. *Evening*, and *Morning*, and at *noon*, will I *pray*.

Pſal. 1. 2. In his law doth he *meditate day* and *night*.

Luk. 2. 37. Anna ſerved God, with *faſtings* and *prayers*, *night* and *day*.

1 *Tim.* 5. 5, 6. She that is a Widow indeed, *continues* in *prayers night and day*: but ſhe that lives in *pleaſure*, is dead whilſt ſhe lives.

Epheſ. 6. 18. *Pray alwayes*, *watching* thereunto with all *perſeverance*.

Epheſ. 5. 4. 19. Nor fooliſh talking, nor jeſting, but *giving of thanks*: ſpeaking to your ſelves in *Pſalmes* and *Hymnes*.

Mar. 1. 35. Jeſus riſing *a great while before day*, went into a *ſolitary place* and *prayed*.

Luk. 6. 12. He went into *a mountain*, and con-

continued all night in prayer.

Luk. 5. 16. And he withdrew himſelf into the *wilderneſs* and *prayed.*

Act. 16. 25. And at *midnight* Paul and Silas *prayed.*

Act. 2. 42. [After their converſion] they *continued ſtedfaſtly* in breaking of bread and *prayers.*

Act. 10. 2. Cornelius a devout man, feared God *with all his houſe, gave much almes* to the people, and *prayed alway.*

2 *Cor.* 6. 5. [Compared with 2 *Cor.* 11. 23, &c.] in *labours, in watchings,* in *faſtings,* in *hunger* and *thirſt,* in wearyneſs and painfulneſs.

Matth. 11. 12. The kingdome of heaven *ſuffers violence,* and the *violence* take it *by force.*

Prov. 28. 14. Happy is that man that *feareth always.*

Luk. 12. 35, 36. Let your *loyns be girded,* and your lights *burning,* waiting for the coming of the Lord.

Luk. 13. 23. Lord are there *few that be ſaved? ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait gate,* for I ſay unto you, *many ſhal ſeek to enter* in, and *ſhall not be able.*

1 *Cor.*

1 *Cor.* 9. 24. All run in the *race*, but one *receiveth* the *prize*. So run that ye may *obtain*—he that ſtriveth muſt be *temperate in all things*—I *keep under my body*, leſt—I ſhould prove a caſt-away.

Matth. 22. 14. Many are called, but *few* are *choſen*.

1 *Cor.* 3. 15. He ſhall be *ſaved, ſo as by fire*.

1 *Pet.* 4. 11. If the righteous *ſcarcely be ſaved*.

Matth. 19. 23, 24. A rich man ſhall *hardly enter*, &c.

Act. 20. 31. Therefore *watch*, and remember that by the ſpace of three yeeres, I ceaſed not to *warn every one night and day with tears*.

1 *Joh.* 7. 19. The *whole world* lyeth in *wickedneſs*.

1 *Cor.* 1. 26. Not many wiſe, not many mighty, not many noble.

Luk. 19. 23. Every man ſhall receive *according to his talent*.

Luk. 12. 43, &c. Bleſſed is that ſervant, whom the Lord *when he cometh*, ſhall finde *ſo doing*.

Matth. 25. 30. Caſt ye *the unprofitable ſervant* into utter darkneſs. [Yee

[Yea, though he had not waſted his talent, but kept it clean and trim in a napkin.]

Matth. 25.41. Depart ye *curſed*, ye did not *feed* me, nor *clothed* me, nor *give me drink*.

2 *Cor.* 5.10. *We* muſt *all* appear before the judgement ſeat of Chriſt, *that every one may receive the things done* in his body, *whether good or evill*, according *to that he hath done*.

Matth. 12.36. ——*every idle word* that men ſhall ſpeak, they ſhall give an *account thereof* at the day of judgement.

2 *Pet.* 3.11. Seeing then that all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought ye to be *in all holy converſation?*

Verſe 14. Beloved, ſeeing that ye look for ſuch things, *be diligent*, that ye may be found of him in peace, *without ſpot and blameleſs*.

Luk. 21.36. Watch ye *therefore* and pray, that ye may be thought worthy to eſcape all theſe things, and to ſtand before the Son of man.

Heb. 12.17. You know how that afterward when he would have inherited the bleſſing,

bleſſing, *he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he ſought it carefully with tears.*

Heb. 10. 26. If we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledg of the truth, there remaines *no more ſacrifice* for him.

Luk. 13. 25. When once the maſter of the houſe is riſen up, and hath *ſhut to the door*, and ye begin to ſtand without and to knock—And he ſhall anſwer, *I know you not whence you are.*

Epheſ. 9. 12. For man alſo knoweth not *his time* as the fiſhes that are taken in an evill net, and as the birds caught in the ſnare.

Prov. 1. 24. Becauſe I have called and ye have refuſed, I will alſo *laugh at your calamity*, and *mock* when your fear cometh.

Luk. 6. 24. Woe unto you that are *rich*, for *you have received your conſolation* —Woe to you that are *full*—Woe unto you that *laugh now.*

Prov. 1. 32. —the proſperity of fooles ſhall deſtroy them.

Luk.

Luk. 16. 25. Remember that thou *in thy life time receivedſt thy good things*, and now thou art tormented.

Heb. 11. 25. Chuſing rather *to ſuffer affliction with the people of God*, then to enjoy the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon.

Luk. 6. 20. Bleſſed be ye *poor*—bleſſed are ye that *hunger* now—bleſſed are ye that *weep* now, —bleſſed are ye when men ſhall *hate you*, and ſhall *reproach* you —rejoyce ye in that day and leap for joy.——

Pſal. 17. 14. From the men of the world O Lord, from the men of the world, *which have their portion in this life*, whoſe belly thou filleſt with thy hid treaſure, &c.

Iude 12. feeding *without fear*.

Matth. 13. 45. The wiſe Merchant *ſold all he had to buy the pearle*.

Matth. 13. 22. The cares of this world, and *deceitfulneſs* of riches *choak the word*.

Luk. 12. 33. *Sell* that ye have and give *almes*, *provide for your ſelves a treaſure in heaven* that faileth not, [compared with 31, 32. 34.]

Matth.

Matth. 19. 21. —— If thou wilt be perfect, goe and *ſell* that thou haſt and *give to the* poor, and *thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven*, and come and follow me.

Act. 2. 44, 45. And all that believed were together, ---and *ſold their* poſſeſſions and goods, and parted them. ———

1 *Cor.* 10. 24. 33. Let no man *ſeek his own*, but every man *anothers wealth*; even as I pleaſe all men in all things, not *ſeeking my own profit, but* the profit of many, that they may be ſaved.

1 *Cor.* 13. 5. Charity *ſeeketh not her own.*

Rom. 15. 2, 3. Let every one of us *pleaſe his neighbour*, and not our ſelves--for even *Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf.*

2 *Cor.* 9. 6. He that ſoweth *ſparingly*, ſhall reap *ſparingly.*

Act. 9. 39. They ſhewed him the *coats and garments* which *Dorcas* had made.

Luk. 16. 9. *Make* ye *friends of the unrighteous Mammon*, that when ye faile, *they may receive ye into everlaſting habitations.*

Luk. 14. 13, 14. When *thou makeſt a feaſt*, call the *poor*, the *maimed*, the *blinde*, and thou *ſhalt be bleſſed*, for thou ſhalt be recompenſed at the reſurrection of the juſt.

Dan. 4. 27. Break off thy ſins by righteouſneſſe, and *thine iniquities by ſhewing mercy*

mercy to the poor, it may be a lengthening of thy tranquillity.

Prov. 16. 6. *By mercy* and truth *iniquity is purged.*

Luk. 7. 47. her *ſins* which are many are *forgiven* her, becauſe *ſhe loved much.*

Luk. 19. 8. 19. *Zacheus* gave *half his goods* to the *poor.*

1 *Tim.* 6. 19. charge the rich---that they diſtribute, *laying up* in ſtore for themſelves *a good foundation*, that they may *lay hold* on eternall life.

1 *Jam.* 27. Pure *religion* is this —— *to viſite the fatherleſs* and *widows* in their affliction.

Duk. 11. 41. Give *almes*, and all things are *clean unto you.*

2 *Cor.* 8. 7. As ye abound *in faith and knowledge*, ſee that ye abound *in this grace* alſo.

1 *Tim.* 2. 9, 10. —that women adorn themſelves in modeſt apparell, with ſhamefaſtneſs and ſobriety, not with plaited hair, or gold or pearles—— *but with good works.*

1 *Pet.* 3. 3, 4. whoſe adorning let it not be outward, of plaiting the hair— but let it be the hidden man of the heart—— even the

the ornament of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which is in the ſight of God of great price.

Luk. 1.74. he hath *delivered* us, that we might *ſerve* him, —*in holineſs and righteouſneſs* all the dayes of our life.

1 *Pet.* 2. 21, 22. Chriſt hath *ſuffered for us*, leaving us an *example*—*that ye ſhould follow his ſteps*— who did *no ſin*.

Heb. 12. 14.—and *holyneſs*, without which *no man ſhall ſee God*.

Phil. 2. 12 *Work* out *your ſalvation with fear and trembling*.

1 *Pet.* 1. 17. *If ye call him father*, who without reſpect of perſons judgeth according to every mans work, *paſs the time* of your ſojourning here *with fear*.

Gal. 6. 7. Be not *deceived*, God is not *mocked*, for whatſoever a man *ſoweth* that ſhall he alſo *reap*; for he that *ſoweth to his fleſh, ſhall of his fleſh reap corruption*.

Joh. 9. 39. for *judgement* I am come into this world.

Rom. 1. 18. The *wrath of* God is revealed from heaven againſt all *ungodlineſs* of men, who *hold the truth in unrighteouſneſs*.

Matth. 3. 10. 12. *Now* is the ax laid to the root of the tree—every tree that *bringeth*

eth not forth *good fruit* is hewen down and caſt into the fire—Chriſts fanne is in his hand, and he will *thoroughly purge his* floor—and *burn* up the *chaffe* with unquenchable fire.

Jam. 2. 14. What doth it profit though a man ſay he hath *faith and have no workes? can faith ſave him?*

Epheſ. 5. 5, 6. Ye know that no whoremonger—nor *covetous man* hath any inheritance *in the kingdom of Chriſt; let no man deceive you with vain words.*

Act. 9, 36. This woman (Dorcas) was *full of good works* and almeſdeeds which ſhe did.

2 *Tit.* 11. 12. The *Grace of God* hath appeared—teaching us to deny ungodlyneſs and *worldly luſts.*

2 *Tim.* 1. 6. *Stir* up the gift of God in thee.

1 *Tim.* 4. 13, 14. Give *attendance to reading—neglect not* the gift that is in thee—*meditate on theſe* things—give thy ſelf wholly to them.

1 *Theſ.* 5. 19. Quench not the ſpirit—not *ſlothfull in buſineſs*, pray evermore.

Col. 3. 5. *Mortifie your members* which are upon earth.

Ephes. 5. 15. Walk *circumspectly, redeeming* the time.

2 *Pet.* 1. 5. *Give all diligence*, add to your *faith vertue*, and to vertue knowledge, and to knowledge *temperance.*

1 *Cor.* 9. 24. *I keep under my body.*

Matth. 19. 12. And there be *Eunuches*, which have *made themselves* so for the *kingdom of heavens sake.*

Heb. 5. 8. Christ *learned* obedience by those things he suffered.

Prov. 3. 17. Her wayes are *wayes* of *pleasantness*, and all her *pathes* are *peace.*

1 *Joh.* 5 3. His *commands* are not *grievous.*

Matth. 11. 28, &c. My yoak is *easie*, and burden *light.*

Psal. 31. 19. 23, 24. How great is thy *goodness*, which thou hast laid up for them that feare thee, &c.

Phil. 4. 13. I *can do all things* through Christ that strengthens me.

Psal. 119. 103. How *sweet* are thy words unto my taste; *sweeter then honey.*

Psal. 19. 10. More to be *desired then gold*, yea, then *fine gold.*

Psal. 34. 8. Taste and try how gratious the Lord is.

Joh.

Joh. 4.34. Jeſus ſaid, *My meat is to doe the will* of him that ſent me.

1 *Pet.* 1.8. Ye rejoyce with *joy unſpeakable and full of glory.*

Rom. 6.21. What *fruit* had ye in thoſe things whereof ye are now *aſhamed.*

Jam. 5.17. Elias was a man *ſubject to like paſſions as we* are, and he *prayed earneſtly*, &c.

And with theſe, conſider ſeriouſly the great unworthineſs of ſuch a thought or queſtion as this. *How much of theſe things muſt I, or how few or little may I practiſe to avoid ſinning, or to attain ſalvation* (Ecclus. 11.23.26.) A queſtion moſt ungratefull towards him, that meaſured not out his love ſo niggardly to us, (Eſ. 5.4.) when he gave his onely Son to be murthered for us; a queſtion proceeding from the ſlaviſh ſpirit of bondage, (and not of love) that would fain compound the buſineſs between God and the preſent world, and enjoy thoſe two enemies, as both his own friends. A queſtion ignorant of Gods purchaſe of our bodies and ſoules to ſerve him, and of our ſolemne vowes in Baptſme, and the new Covenant made with God. A queſtion

ſtion tending to the reſiſtance, and quenching of Gods grace, and the Holy Spirit, which within us would advance us ſtill further in holyneſſe; whereas this our ingratitude will ſtint its benevolence, and onely be illuminated and helped by it, for what is abſolutely neceſſary. By its juſt indignation thoſe many times being denyed this, who care for no more, and loath to be better then good, they never attain ſo farre as to be good; (which mark few hit which levell not above it) a queſtion fooliſhly propoſed, as if there were hereafter no degrees in the reward anſwerable to greater ſervice here: And as if the narrowneſſe of the way, the paucity of the ſaved, the ſtrictneſſe of our Saviours precepts, our conformity required in this life to Chriſts ſufferings, the greatneſſe of our former ſins, truly deſerving eternall torments, (which obliege us to love much, where much hath been forgiven) the difficulty of a ſufficient repentance, the laborious examples of Saints, did not all cry aloud to us, that doing our beſt is little enough for ſalvation, and to be happy in the loweſt degree. Laſtly, a queſtion that can never be anſwered for any ones ſecurity that askes it. The meaſure of loving

God

God, is to love him above meaſure, ſaith Saint *Auſtine*. *Nunquam dicito, Sufficit; cum deſinis eſſe melior, incipis eſſe deterior*: Never ſay tis enough, for when thou ceaſeſt to grow better, thou beginneſt to grow worſe. He that ſeriouſly conſiders that precept of our Saviour, *Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father* is perfect, *Matth.* 5. And his own daily Petition, Thy will be done in earth *as it is in heaven*, will both ſee himſelf obliged to doe more then he doth, and be convinced that by the help of Gods ſpirit alwayes ready to promote him, he may attain in time to what others have attained.

What great good many have received by the lives of holy people, is evident from Saint *Auſtine*, who in his eighth book of his Confeſſions, gives an account of the benefit which himſelf, and two more received by the relation of the life of Saint *Anthony*, (well worth our reading) in theſe words.

When I applyed my ſelf to Saint *Ambroſes* father, he fell upon the diſcourſe of one *Victorinus* a Philoſopher, converted to be a Chriſtian; who though a man moſt skilfull in all the liberall ſciences, and had

been Maſter to ſo many noble ſenators, and as an Enſigne of his ſo famous Maſterſhip, obtained a ſtatue in the Roman forum: yet bluſhed not to become a ſervant of Chriſt, ſubmitting his neck to the yoke of humility, and ſubduing his forehead to the ignominy of the croſſe: I was all on fire to be imitating him, but bound I was with my own iron will; the enemy was maſter of my willingneſſe, (by which hee made a chain for me) and had therewith bound me, becauſe that of a frowand will is a luſt made, and a luſt ever obeyed, becomes a cuſtome, and a cuſtome not reſiſted, brings on a neceſſity, by which did a very hard bondage hold me enthralled; as for that new will which now I began to have towards the worſhipping and enjoying of thee, O God, the only aſſured ſweetneſſe, it was not able as yet to overcome my former wilfulneſſe, now hardened in me by ſo long continuance.

Thus did my two wills try maſteries within me, and by their diſagreeing waſted out my ſoul, thus came I to underſtand what I had ſometime read, *That the fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh*, Gal. 5. 17. And yet was cuſtome now by my own aſſiſtance become more

more ſturdy againſt me, becauſe I was carried thither willingly, whither my will was not to have come; and who therefore can with any equity find fault, if juſt puniſhment followes upon our wilfull ſinning? Nor had I now that fair pretence or excuſe which formerly I ſeemed to have, when not engaged to forſake the world to attend thy ſervice, for that the knowledge of the truth was then uncertain to me, ſeeing now I ſtood aſſured of it, but I being preſt for the earth, refuſed to fight under thy banner; yea, as much afraid was I to be freed of what did hinder my march towards thee, as I ought to have been afraid of what might hinder it; thus with the baggage of this preſent world, was I as ſweetly overladen, as a man uſeth to be with ſleepyneſſe, and thoſe thoughts with which I meditated upon thee, were like the offers of ſuch as would get up, and yet being overcome with a lazy drowſineſſe lye down again, and like a ſluggiſh man who though angry at himſelfe for it, yet unwillingly willing takes another ſweet nap, notwithſtanding he knowes it to be high time for him to be ſtirring: ſo aſſured was I that much better it were for me to give up my ſelf to thy goodneſſe, then to

give over my self to my sensuality: yet notwithstanding that pleased and overcame my reason, this tickled and enthral'd my senses.

Nor had I any thing now to answer thee calling to me, *Arise thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light*, Ephes. 5. 14. but certain lither and drowsie words, *Anon, Presently, Come by and by, let me sleep a little while*: but my *Now* and *Anon* had no *measure* with them, and my *little while* drove on to a mighty length. *I* in vain *delighted in thy law according to the inner man, when another law in my members rebelled against the law of my minde, leading me captive unto the law of sin, which was in my members*, Rom. 7. 22. that *law of sin* now is the violence of custome, by which the minde of man is drawn and holden against its will, deserving to be so holden, because it so willingly slides into that custome.

——And the manner how thou deliveredst me out of the bonds of lust, and from the servitude of worldly businesse, I will now declare, and confesse unto thy name.

My unsetledness of minde grew more

and more upon me, and I daily ſent up ſighs unto thee, I reſorted frequently unto thy Church, as often as the burden of my worldly buſineſſe (under which I groaned) would give me leave, —and upon a certain time (one *Alypius* a lawyer being in my company) there came to us one *Potitianus*, an officer of the Emperors court, and down we ſate all three together; it ſo happened, that upon the table he eſpyed a book lying, which he took up and opened; and quite beyond his expectation, found it to Saint *Paules* Epiſtles, whereas he thought it rather to have been one of my law-bookes; at which he ſmiling to himſelf, and looking upon me (in a congratulating manner as it were) wondred not a little, that he had found ſo unexſpectedly ſuch a book, for he was both a Chriſtian, and one that often uſed to proſtrate himſelf before thee our God in thy Church, in frequent and daily prayer; whom therefore when I had once told that I beſtowed much paines upon that book, began a narration of the life of *Anthony* the Monk of Ægypt, whoſe name was in moſt high reputation amongſt thy ſervants.

But we ſtood amazed, hearing ſuch wonderfull workes, ſo generally teſtified, and

performed alſo almoſt in our own time.

From this ſtory of *Anthony*, took he occaſion to diſcourſe of ſome companies of Monaſteries and their cuſtomes, of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour unto thee, and the fruitfull breaſts of the ſolitary wilderneſſe; We liſtened to him with great ſilence.

Thereupon he took occaſion to tell how himſelf and three of his Comrades at *Triers* walking there in the Gardens near the City walls, ſorted themſelves into two companies, whereof one company ranging about, ſtumbled by chance on a certain houſe, inhabited by divers of thy ſervants, *poor in ſpirit, of whom is the kingdome of God*; where they found a little book of the life of *Anthony*, one of them began to read it, wonder at it, and be inflamed with it, and even in the very reading, to deviſe upon the taking ſuch a life upon him, and by giving over his ſecular employments to betake himſelf to thy ſervice.

And immediately filled with a holy love, and a ſober ſhamefaſtneſſe, even angry at himſelf, again he caſt his eyes upon his friend ſaying, Tell me what preferment is that unto which all theſe labours of ours aſpire? what aime we at? what is it we ſerve the State for? can our hopes in court

riſe

riſe higher then to be the Emperours favourites? in which fortune, what is there not brittle and full of dangers? and by how many perils arrive we at laſt unto one danger greater then all the reſt? and how long ſhall we be getting thus high? whereas if I be deſirous onely to become the friend of God, I am even now made it.

This he ſaid, and all in pain in the travaile of newneſſe of life, he turn'd his eyes again upon the book, and read on, and was inwardly changed, his minde being quite diſpoſſeſt of worldly cares; for as he read forward, and rolled up and down thoſe waves of his heart, he expreſt ſome indignation at himſelf, felt an inward conflict, and reſolved finally upon much better courſes; and thus now become wholly thine, he ſaith to his friend, Even now have I broke looſe from thoſe ambitious hopes of ours, and am fully reſolved to ſerve God onely: as for thee, if thou wilt not imitate me, diſſwade me not. Whereunto the other anſwered, that he alſo would cloſely ſtick unto him, as his partner in ſo ample a reward, and his comrade in ſo honourable a ſervice. Thus both of them now become thine, and built a ſpirituall tower with their own treaſury, *forſaking all, and following thee.* The-

The other two came unto them in this very nick of time, and underſtanding their reſolutions, would not be altered, yet did bewaile themſelves (as *Potitianus* who himſelf was one of them confeſſed) with teares, piouſly congratulating with them, and recommended themſelves to their prayers: and turning their hearts towards earthly things, returned into the Court, but the other two ſetting their affections upon heavenly things, remained in that Cottage.

This was *Potitianus* his ſtory; but thou O Lord all the while that he was ſpeaking, didſt turn me back to reflect upon my ſelf, taking me from behinde my back where I had ſet me, when I had no liſt to obſerve my own ſelf, and now ſet me before my own face, that I might diſcern how filthy, and crooked, and ſordid, and beſpotted, and ulcerous I was; and I beheld and abhorred my ſelf, and yet knew not how to flye from my ſelf; for thou ſtill oppoſedſt my ſelf unto my ſelf, and thruſtedſt me ever and anon into my own eyes, to make me finde at laſt my own iniquity, and make me loath it — and how much the more ardently I loved thoſe two, whoſe wholſome purpoſe I heard related, even for that they had

had reſigned up themſelves to thee to be cured, ſo much the more deteſtably did I hate my ſelf in compariſon of them — for having ſo long delayed to ſearch out that, of which, not onely the finding, but even the bare ſeeking is before all pleaſures. — But I a moſt wretched young fellow, unhappy even in the very entrance of my youth, had even then begged chaſtity at thy hands, and ſaid, Give me chaſtity, but give it not yet, for I was afraid that thou wouldeſt hear me too ſoon; — And this was the reaſon I think why I deferred from day to day to contemne all hopes in this world, & follow thee; becauſe there did not appear to me any certain end to which I might direct my courſe; but now was the day come wherein I was to be ſet naked before my ſelf, and when my own conſcience was to convince me, a certainty appeared now where I might take up, & yet ſtil did that burden overload me, whereas behold others have gotten wings to free their ſhoulders by flying from under it. — Thus felt I a corroſive within, yea moſt vehemently confounded was I, whilſt *Potitianus* was telling that ſtory — and after his departure, I ſaid to my ſelf, Yea what ſaid I not within my ſelf? with what ſcourges

of

of condemning ſentences laſht I not my own ſoul? to make it follow me, endeavouring now to goe after thee: which yet drew back and refuſed, but gave no reaſon of its refuſall, all its arguments were already ſpent and confuted, there remained a ſilent trembling, and it feared like death, to be reſtrained of the ſwinge of cuſtome.

In the midſt of this inteſtine war waged within my bowels, with open mouth I ſet upon my friend *Alipius*, cry ng out, *Why tarry we any longer? what is this? what heardeſt thou even now? the unlearned of the world ſtarr up, and take the kingdome by violence, and we with all our learning wanting hearts wallow in fleſh and blood*: becauſe others are gone before, is't a ſhame for us to come after? or is it not rather a great ſhame not at all to goe after them? for not onely to goe towards, but to arrive fully at that happineſſe, requireth no more but the will to goe to it, but yet to will it thoroughly and reſolutely, not with a ſtaggering and a half ſick will, to be off, and on, when the will is not all one with the power, for as ſoon as I had the will to doe, I had the power alſo, becauſe as ſoon as ever I willed, I willed thoroughly; for at ſuch a time the power is all one with the will,

will, and the willing is now the doing. But when the ſoul willeth not entirely, neither doth it command entirely, for ſo far forth it commandeth as it willeth: and ſo far forth is not the thing done, which is commanded, as it willeth it not. Becauſe verily it doth not command fully, therefore is not the thing done which it commandeth; for were the willing full, it would never command there ſhould be a bare willing, becauſe that willing was there before. 'Tis therefore no monſter, partly to will and partly to nill; onely an infirmity of the ſoul, that it being over-loaded with ill cuſtome, cannot entirely riſe up, although aſſiſted by divine truth.

Thus ſoul-ſick I was, and in this manner tormented, turning and winding my ſelf in my chain, till that which held me might be utterly broken; and thou O Lord preſſedſt upon me in my bowels with a moſt ſevere mercy, redoubling thy laſhes of fear and ſhame, leſt I ſhould give way again—for I ſaid within my ſelf, *Let it be done now, let it be done forthwith*; and no ſooner had I ſaid the word, but I began to put on the reſolution; now I even almoſt did it, yet indeed I did it not quite: and I wanted but very little of getting up to it,

and

and the worſe that I had been antiently accuſtomed unto, prevailed more with me, then the better which I had never tryed; on the one ſide my antient vanities ſhook me by this fleſhly garment, and ſpake ſoftly in my eare; *Canſt thou thus part with us? and ſhall we more accompany thee for ever?* and what were thoſe things which they ſuggeſted? O my God, ſuch as let thy mercy utterly turn away from the ſoul of thy ſervant: I heard them verily not half ſo near hand now, nor ſo freely contradicting me, but muttering as it were ſoftly behinde my back, and even now ready to be packing, yet giving me a privy pluck, to look once more back upon them.

But on the other ſide, continency diſcovered her ſelf, honeſtly tempting me to come to her, and doubt nothing, there were in company with her, very many both young men and maidens, and grave widowes, and antient virgins, and ſhe was pleaſant with me with a kinde of exhorting quip, ſaying; *Canſt not thou perform what thoſe of both ſexes have performed? or can any of theſe perform thus much of themſelves? or rather by the Lord their God? the Lord their God gave me unto them, why ſtandeſt thou upon thy own ſtrength? and*

ſtandeſt

ſtandeſt not at all? caſt thy ſelf upon him, fear not, he will not ſlip away and make thee fall, caſt thy ſelf ſecurely upon him, he will receive thee and heal thee. I bluſht all this while to my ſelf very much, and this controverſie I felt in my heart about nothing but my ſelf againſt my ſelf.

So ſoon therefore as a deep conſideration even from the ſecret bottome of my ſoul had drawn together, and laid all my miſery upon one heap before my heart, there aroſe a mighty ſtorm, accompanyed with a ſhowre of tears, which that I might vent freely, with expreſſions moſt ſuitable, I roſe up from my friend *Alipius*, conceiving ſolitarineſſe more agreeable to that paſſion; I flung down my ſelf I know not how under a figge tree, giving free liberty to my tears; whereupon the flouds of my eyes guſhed out, an acceptable ſacrifice to thee O Lord, and much to this purpoſe ſaid I unto thee, *How long Lord wilt thou be angry, for ever? remember not my former iniquities:* yea I ſent up theſe miſerable exclamations, *How long? how long? ſtill to morrow, and to morrow? why not now? wherefore even this very hour is there not an end put to my uncleanneſſe?*

Thus much I uttered, weeping in the moſt

moſt bitter contrition of my heart, when behold I heard a voyce in a ſinging Tune ſaying, and often repeating, *Take up and read, take up and read:* whereupon up I got, interpreting it no other, but that I was from God himſelf commanded to open the book *and read* the Chapter which I ſhould firſt light upon: for I had heard of *Anthony*, that by hearing the Goſpell read, he took himſelf to be admoniſhed, as if it had purpoſely been ſpoken to him, *Go and ſell that thou haſt, and give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heauen, and follow me*, and by ſuch a miracle was he preſently converted to thee.

Haſtily therefore went I again to the place where I left *Alipius*, and ſnatcht up the Apoſtles book, and in ſilence I read that Chapter which I firſt caſt my eyes upon, *Not in rioting and drunkenneſſe, not in chambering and wantonneſſe, not in ſtrife and envying, but put on the Lord Jeſus, and make no proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfill the luſts thereof.* No further would I read, nor needed I, for inſtantly, even with the end of this ſentence, by a light as it were of ſecurity darted into my ſoul, all the darkneſſe of wavering vaniſhed: for ſo throughly thou hereby convertedſt me unto thy

ſelf,

ſelf, that I ſought now no more after a wife, nor any other hopes in this world.

O Lord truly I am thy ſervant I am thy ſervant, and the *Son of thy handmaid, thou haſt broken my bonds in ſunder. I will offer to thee the ſacrifice of praiſe,* Pſal. 116. 16, 17. Let my *heart praiſe thee,* and my tongue, yea, let *all my bones ſay, O Lord who is like unto thee?* let them ſay, and anſwer thou me, *and ſay unto my ſoul, I am thy ſalvation.* Who am I? and what manner of man? what evill have I not done? But thou O Lord art good and mercyfull, and thy right hand had reſpect unto the profoundneſſe of my death, and drew forth out of the bottome of my heart, that bottomleſſe gulf of corruption, which was to nill all that thou willedſt, and to will all that thou nilledſt.

But where lay for ſo long a time? and out of what bottome and deep ſecret corner, was *my free will* called forth in a moment, whereby I ſubmitted my neck to thy *eaſie yoak*, Matth. 11. 30. and my ſhoulders unto thy *light burthen*, O Jeſus Chriſt, my helper and my Redeemer?

Pſal.19.

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Pſal. 19. 14. How pleaſant was it all on the ſuddain made unto me, to want the pleaſures of vanities? yea what I before feared to loſe, was now a joy unto me to forgoe. For thou didſt caſt them away from me, even thou that reall and chiefeſt ſweetneſſe; thou threweſt them out, and in ſtead of them cameſt in thy ſelf, ſweeter then all pleaſure, though not to fleſh and blood; brighter then all light, yea more privy then all ſecrets, higher then all honour, though not to thoſe that are high in themſelves. How became my ſoul free from thoſe biting cares of aſpiring, and getting, and weltring in filth, and from the tormenting itch of luſt. And I converſed more familiarly now with thee my honour, my riches, my health, my Lord God.

Difficile

Difficile, imò impoſſibile eſt, ut quis in utroque ſæculo beatus ſit, ut hic ventrem, ibi mentem impleat, ut de delitiis tranſeat ad delitias Hieron: Epiſt.

It is difficult, yea impoſſible, to be both happy here and hereafter, to ſatisfie this appetite here, and thy minde there, to paſſe from temporall pleaſures to eternall.

Delicatus es frater, ſi & hic vis gaudere cum mundo, & poſtea regnare cum Chriſto.

Thou art too ſweet-tooth'd (brother) if thou wouldeſt rejoyce here with the world, and reign hereafter with Chriſt.

Licet quidam putent majoris eſſe virtutis, præſentem contemnere voluptatem; tamen ego puto ſecurioris eſſe continentiæ, neſcire quod quæras.

Let others thinke it greater fortitude to outdare preſent delights: I muſt judge it more ſecurity to avoyd the temptations.

Phi-

Philoſophus gloriæ animal, & popularis auræ vile mancipium, totam ſimul ſarcinam depoſuit; & tu te putas in virtutum culmine conſtitutum, ſi partem ex toto offeras?

The Philoſopher who was wholly glories creature, and a ſlave to popular breath, could throw away all the baggage of his money; and canſt thou think thy ſelf perfect, if thou offereſt up onely a part?

Aſperam nobis & inſuavem virtutum viam, nimia facit vitiorum conſuetudo, quæ ſi in partem alteram transferatur, invenietur ſemita juſtitiæ levis.

That which makes the way of virtue ſeem rough and unpleaſant, is only the cuſtom of ſinning: if we look upon it on the other part it will appear a ſmooth path of righteouſneſſe.

Grandem vim obtinet vera dilectio, & qui perfectè amatur, totam ſibi amantis vendicat voluntatem: nihil imperioſius eſt

eſt charitate, nos ſi verè Chriſtum diligimus, ſi ejus nos redemptos ſanguine recordamur, nihil magis velle, nihil omninò debemus agere, quàm quod illum velle cognoſcimus. Quotieſcunque te vana ſæculi delectaverit ambitio, quoties in mundo aliquid videris glorioſum; ad paradiſum mente tranſgredere, & eſſe incipe quod futurus es.

True love carries a great force with it, and what is perfectly beloved will draw to it the entire affection of the lover: nothing is ſo commanding as charity, if we love Chriſt truly; if we remember that we are redeemed by his blood we ſhall will nothing more, nor act any thing more earneſtly then what we are certain he liketh: as often therefore as the vain ambition of the world enticeth thee, as often as thou ſeeſt any thing in it alluring thee; take a turn in heaven, and begin in thy thoughts to be here, what thou ſhalt be for ever hereafter.

Ceſſet

Ceſſet omnis excuſatio errorum, auferantur peccandi fœda ſolatia: nihil omnino agimus, qui nos per multitudinis exempla defendimus, & ad conſolationem noſtram aliena ſæpe numerantes vitia: deeſſe nobis dicimus, quos debeamus ſequi: ad illius exemplum mittimur, quem omnes fatemur imitandum, atque ideo tibi præcipuæ curæ ſit, legem noſſe divinam per quam poſſis quaſi præſentia cernere exempla ſanctorum. Idem Hieron: *in* Epiſt.

Ceaſe now to excuſe thy errors, give over the filthy delights of ſinning, in vain doe we defend our ſinnes by the examples of the multitude, and flatter our ſelves with the frequency of others vices, as if we had not better patternes to imitate: we are commanded to the pattern of our Saviour, whom we cannot but acknowledge our ſelves bound to follow, read the Scriptures, in which thou ſhalt meet with the examples of thoſe Saints whom thou maiſt ſafely be guided by.

The end of the Life.

The Returns of Spirituall Comfort and Grief, in a *Devout Soul.*

Repreſented to the late Lady Vi-Counteſſe *Falkland*, in her life time, by entercourſe of Letters.

The Firſt Letter.

Upon the Souls conſtancie and frequency in holy Duties, her comforts in them are repreſented.

Sir,

I Should be not onely unthankful, but uncivil, if I give you not account of my ſtate and condition, ſince our laſt abode together.

With humble thanks to God, for his grace and goodnes, towards me, premiſed, thus it is. Your Spiritual directions I

have obſerved, as punctually as I could: I am preſent at all *publick Aſſemblies*, in the houſe of God, and bear my part conſtantly in that ſolemne worſhip of his Name. And to theſe publick devotions, I adde *private Prayers* with my family, *Morning* and *Evening*, and to them, *Secret*, in my *Cloſet*, and theſe duties I perform conſtantly; for I remember you told me, that that ſtrict precept of the Apoſtle, *Pray continually*, hath not ordinarily a more qualified ſenſe then this, *Obſerve your ſet-times of Prayer, conſtantly, without intermiſſion.*

Neither am I leſſe conſtant at *Sermons*, and Catechiſings, and at the *Holy Sacrament* of our moſt *Bleſſed Lords Body and Blood*, though I cannot be ſo frequent at *theſe duties*; *Thoſe* I can hear but once a week, *this* I can receive but once a moneth. And on dayes of *Humiliation*, I labour to intermix more earneſt, as well as more frequent *Prayers*, for the publick neceſſities, and for mine own private wants; endeavouring to obſerve the *Ordinary*, and *extraordinary Faſts* of the *Church*, as ſtrictly as my weak body, and my weaker fleſh will give me leave.

And that which I relate all this for,

which

which I dare not divulge to others, nor conceal from you, is this: my exceeding great *delight* in theſe *ſpirituall exerciſes*; while I hear, or read, I taſte much *ſweetneſſe* in the promiſes of the Goſpel; and while I *pray* or *meditate*, I receive much *comfort* and *delight*; my ſoul is filled as it were with *marrow and fatneſſe*, and my heart is almoſt raviſhed with *ſpirituall joy*.

Now and then I compare the former *pleaſures* and *delights*, I had in worldly things, at Court, with *theſe* I now enjoy, and I account *them* all as droſſe and dung in compariſon of *theſe*; And if it were, Capital in the Judiciall Law, for any one to have a perfume in his houſe, like to that of the Tabernacle, *Exod.* 30. *ult.* ſurely he is not guiltleſs, who fancies any true *ſweetneſſe*, or *delight*, any where, but in the *Tabernacle*: no perfume can be made, nor ought to be thought, ſo ſweet, ſo fragrant, ſo excellent, as this; no *delights*, or *comforts* in our own houſes, or in Kings Courts either, comparable to theſe of the *Tabernacle*, and *Temple of* God.

Now I miſſe thoſe opportunities I had *at Court and at the Cathedral Church*;

either of those places afforded publick *Prayers thrice every day*, and *Lectures* also on the *week dayes*; Nay, it is not here so well with me, as it was, when you and I lived together in that Country Village, where the good *Parson* had *Morning and Evening Prayer* in the Parish Church, *twice* a day continually; where I now live we have this advantage of *Publick Prayer*, onely on the *Lords Day*, and *its Eve*, an on *Holy-days*, and their *Eve's*, and on *Wednesdays* and *Fridays*, our wonted *Letany-days*; now I find not that other *Analogie* between our *Prayers*, and the *Incense* and *perfumes* of the *Tabernacle*, that as *those* were, so *these* are now offered up daily: However the *sweetness* of them is it I speak of, which I have most plentifully from them.

And now upon the *sense* and *feeling* of these *joyes* and *comforts* in the service of God, I am confirmed in hope, that *neither Life, nor Death, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate me from the Love of God, and of his service* and *worship*; but as I have begun, so I shall (by Gods grace) persevere in it, to my lives end; for which I pray daily

daily, and doe alſo deſire your prayers, for him, who is,

Yours in the Lord.

The Anſwer.

Sheweth the ſpecial favour of God, affording at the firſt beginning of a Devout life, both ſenſible and ſpiritual Conſolations.

Sir,

YOurs I received, and rejoyce with you, for the *Comforts* and *joyes* you find in the *ſervice* of God, and for your diligence in holy duties, and exerciſes of Devotion: you now *taſte*, and *ſee* the goodneſſe of the Lord, that *in keeping of his Commandements*, there is exceeding *delight* and *joy*; *Pſal.* 19. not onely *comfort* laid up for it hereafter, but alſo *comfort* in it here; ſuch as eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard; nor hath it entred into the heart of man, to conceive what God hath prepared, even in this world, (for of ſuch the Apoſtle ſpeaks in that place) for ſuch as love him; 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. ſo that *vertue* and *piety* is an excellent great *reward* to it ſelf: And yet that

which is before us, hereafter, is infinitely beyond this; for if there be ſuch *pleaſures* in the Kingdome of *Grace*, how unſpeakably tranſcendent are thoſe laid up for us, in the kingdome of *Glory!*

Notwithſtanding there is ſomewhat *ſpecial* in the *goodneſſe* and *wiſdome* of *God*, affording ſuch *comforts* and *delights* unto you at this your firſt ſetting forth in this ſpiritual race. And it is this.

That you may perceive, and that preſently, what *advantage* you have gained by the change of your life; and that thereupon you may ſtrengthen your reſolution more and more, of continuing in this pious courſe, of running to the end of the race, that you may obtain that *prize* of endleſſe *joy* and comfort: For you confeſs your ſelf a great gainer already, having in poſſeſſion *Gold* in ſtead of *Braſſe*, *Silver* for *Lead*, *Spiritual* delights and pleaſures for *worldly* and *carnal*; In ſtead of *huſks* (fit onely for ſwine) in a *ſtrange* Countrey, you have *goodly proviſion* (*a fatted Calf*) and this attended with *mirth* and *muſick*, in your *fathers houſe*.

Oh let not an eye roule, nor a thought ſtray back again towards that ſtrange countrey of Egypt, toward the onions, and fleſh-

fleſh pots there; now you are ſo fully ſatisfied, and delighted with this Manna from heaven! And if at any time you ſhould not taſte the true ſweetneſſe of this, yet let not the falſe pleaſures of the other be once thought on, by you; This I intreat, not without ſome vehemency, and earneſtneſs: For I muſt tell you, that

All ſuch comfort and delight (as you ſeem to ſpeak of) is not *ſpiritual*, nor *laſting*; In theſe *holy exerciſes* (of *faſting*, *praying*, *meditating*, *hearing Sermons*, and *receiving* the *bleſſed Sacrament*, and ſuch like) there is an *outward, and ſenſible comfort*, as well as an *inward*, and *ſpiritual comfort*; and thoſe *ſenſible conſolations* (as they are called) not ſo *laſting*, and permanent, as theſe *inward comforts* are: conſider this, I pray, and examine whether your *comforts* be *inward* and *ſpiritual*, or *outward* and *ſenſible comforts* onely, or whether you abound with *both*: In the mean while I ſhall remember you with *Davids* Prayer (for a people exalted with *joy* and *comfort* in *Gods ſervice*) that *the Lord God would keep this joy for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of your heart*, 1 *Chr.* 29. 18. *and ſtabliſh your heart thereby*, unto himſelf.

Thus desiring your prayers for me, I commend you to Gods protection, and rest

Your servant in our Lord and Master Christ Jesus.

The Second Letter.

The increase of Consolations in a pious Soul.

Sir,

THe Lord heareth your prayers for me, and answereth them gratiously; for my *delights* and *joyes* in the performance of all *holy duties* encrease more and more: At the receiving of the *blessed Sacrament* my *heart* is still more *enlarged*, and more elevated with *heavenly comforts*; and at *solemn humiliations* my *voyce* sometimes *failes* me, by reason of my *groanes* and *sighs*: I seldome rise from my knees, (on those dayes) but I see the floore watred with my *Tears*; And even these *tears* are full of *comfort* and *pleasantness*.

I was wont to object against this course of strict life; that it was full of heavines and dulness; no *comforts* at all in it: but now I perceive, as S. *Augustine* saith in the

the like caſe, *Voi habuiſtis* Deum, *& gavi-ſi eſtis gaudio magno, etſi ego non habui Oculos*; Ye had your *comforts*, and *rejoycings*, though I had not *eyes* to *diſcerne* them: now I bleſs God, that mine eyes are open, and I *taſte* and *ſee* how *gracious* the *Lord* is, and that he beſtowes wonderfull *comforts* on them, who ſerve him.

And therefore I bleſs God who openeth his hand wide, and powreth out plentifully his *comforts* upon me: And ſo much the more muſt I praiſe him, for this goodneſs of his, towards me, becauſe (as you inform me in your letter) theſe *comforts* are not common to all *ranks* of holy Chriſtians, but to *Beginners* chiefly; yea, and many there are (it ſeemes) who both *begin* and *continue on* without them: And this *ſpecial goodneſs* and *mercy* of *God* beſtowing ſuch *comforts* and *mercies* on *me*, which he denies to *many* of His ſervants, who are more forward in holineſs then I, requires my ſpecial praiſe and thanks to Him.

But that *clauſe* in your letter of *ſpiritu-al & ſenſible conſolations*, I doe not clearly apprehend; how (I pray) can there be *ſenſible* conſolations in *inward* and *ſpiritu-al* things? Mine acquaintance with theſe

conſolations is ſo young, that I cannot wel diſtinguiſh between the one, and the other. Neither can I think I want *either* of them, and ſhall ſtill hope that they will be *both* conſtant with me: But if you pleaſe to inſtruct me more fully in theſe *ſpiritual* and thoſe *ſenſible Conſolations*, plowing with your heifer, I ſhall reſolve my ſelf, and anſwer you. And ſo I commend you to God, and reſt

Yours in the Lord.

The Anſwer.

How to diſcern between ſpiritual and ſenſible Conſolations.

Sir,

I Am moſt ready to ſatisfie your deſire, and I ſhall explain my meaning more fully, by anſwering your Queſtion, [How can there be *ſenſible Conſolations* in *inward* and *ſpiritual* things?] before I propound my own.

The Apoſtle *Heb.* 4. 12. ſpeakes of *dividing* between the *Spirit* and the *Soul*; yea, 1 *Theſ.* 5. 23. he does *divide* the *Spirit* and the *Soul*, and diſtinguiſhes as really the

the *Spirit* from the *Soul*, as the *Soul* from the *Body*, naming theſe three diſtinct in man, the *Body*, the *Soul*, and the *Spirit*; which may be ground for that which is ſometimes ſaid, *Man* conſiſts of *three parts:* Of a *Nutritive part*, which receives nouriſhment, and growes; his *Body*, wherein he agrees with Trees and Plants. Secondly, of a *Senſitive part*, which hath *inward* and *outward* ſenſes, which is the *Soul*, wherein he excels Plants, but yet agrees with Beaſts. Thirdly, of a *Rational part*, which hath *reaſon* and *underſtanding*, wherein he excels Beaſts, and agrees with Angels; which is called the *Spirit*.

Now, whatſoever *Conſolations* there are in any other part of man, (except in this third only, the *Spirit*) are called *ſenſible Conſolations:* and ſeeing we muſt be ſanctified throughout in them all Three (which the Apoſtle exhorts to in that place) we may be comforted throughout alſo, in them all Three; and then it comes to paſſe, that many of *thoſe Comforts* are *outward* and *ſenſible*, in *Inward* and *Spiritual* things.

But leſt I ſhould ſeeme to lay my Foundation upon an antiquated diſtinction,

on, I wave this Triparitite, and divide Man into two parts onely, the *Body* and the *Soul*: And yet now I muſt ſub-divide the Soul (& bring this diſtribution of Man, in effect to the ſame with the other, as ordinarily all doe) into a Lower Region, and an Upper; I mean, into Senſitive and Rational faculties; The lower Region or the Senſitive part, conſiſts of the Inward ſenſes, Imagination and Memory, &c. the Upper Region or Rationall part, conſiſts of the Underſtanding and Will. And though the *ſoul* of Man be *immaterial* and *ſpiritual*, and wholly *rational*, yet thoſe operations of Hers, which are immediately by thoſe *inward* (as well as thoſe by our outward) *ſenſes*, are properly enough, called the operations, or Acts of the *ſenſitive* ſoul.

And anſwerable to theſe two parts of the *ſoul*, there are *Spiritual*, and there are *ſenſible Conſolations*: They which are in the *upper* and *rational* part of the *Soul* (the *underſtanding* and the *will*) are moſt properly called *ſpiritual*; And they which are in the *lower*, and *ſenſitive* part of the *ſoul* (the *phantaſie* or *imagination*) though they be concerning *ſpiritual* things, are properly enough called *ſenſible Conſolations*.

And

And theſe ſeverall *Conſolations* are intimated to us, by that of the *Pſalmiſt*; *My heart, and my fleſh delight in the Lord. Pſal.* 84. 2. And the loſs of both theſe in that other place where the *Pſalmiſt* complaines, *My heart, and my fleſh faileth, Pſal.* 73. 26.

Both theſe ſorts of *Conſolations* doe oftentimes proceed from the *holy Spirit*, and in that reſpect, both ſorts may be called *Spiritual*: But I take leave (as others doe) to call onely thoſe in the *heart ſpiritual Conſolations*, becauſe they have their abode in the heart, and *ſpiritual* part of *man*, and thoſe in the *fleſh*, I call *ſenſible Conſolations*, becauſe they have their life and abode in the *ſenſitive* part of *Man*.

Now concerning thoſe *Conſolations* in the *exerciſe* of *holy duties*, which fill our *underſtanding* and *will*, that they are raiſed by the holy Spirit, and alſo cheriſhed by him, there will be little doubt; yet the *holy Spirit* workes theſe ſeverall wayes.

One while the *holy Spirit* caſts his beams of *Comfort directly* upon thoſe *reaſonable faculties* of the *ſoul*, and then they are the work of the *holy Spirit immediately*. Another

ther while the *holy Spirit, firſt*, and directly ſhines upon the *outward* or *inwart ſenſes*, (the *phanſie* and *imagination*) and from thence, by reflexion (as it were) caſts a luſtre of *Comfort* up to the higher *faculties*, the *will* and the *underſtanding*; and then theſe *ſpiritual Conſolations* are the *work* of the *holy Spirit*, though *mediately*.

And concerning our *ſenſible Conſolations*, they are raiſed by the *holy Spirit*, working ſeverall wayes. One while the *holy Spirit* brings theſe *Comforts* into the *imagination*, or *outward ſenſes directly*, and then they are the work of the *holy ſpirit immediately*; But another while the *holy ſpirit* adminiſters great plenty of *Comforts* to the *will*, and *underſtanding*, and from thence they deſcend to the *imagination* and *ſenſes*, the neighboring parts and faculties; And then theſe *ſenſible Conſolations* are the work of the *holy Spirit*, though mediately.

Thus one while the *Miſtreſs* (*Reaſon*) is ſo full of *joy*, that *ſhe* cals her *ſervants* and *neighbours*, (the *imagination* and *outward man*) to *rejoyce* with *her*; and otherwhile the *ſervant* is ſo full, that her *Miſtreſs* partakes with *her*; and ſo the whole

whole *houſe* (*upper* and *lower Region*) is *filled* with *joy*.

And yet, a time there is (of *joy* too) when it is not ſo plentiful; The *miſtreſs rejoycing*, and the *ſervants* no way partaking of it; Or the *ſervants rejoycing*, and the *miſtreſs* having *no ſhare* in it: *joy* there may be in the *upper*, not in the *lower*; or in the *lower*, not in the *upper Region*: When it is, as the *womans leaven*, (a *little*, in a *great lump*) *neither* of *them* can diffuſe their *joy*, and communicate it to the other.

And upon this ground it is, that I move my *queſtion*, ſeeing there may be joy and comfort in the *inward* man, the will and the underſtanding, and none in the *outward*; and on the contrary, there may be joy in the *outward* man (the *imagination* or ſo) and none at all, *above*; It will be very material to reſolve your ſelf at leaſt, of which ſort your *comforts* are.

Eſpecially conſidering that thoſe *joys* above in the *wil* and *underſtanding*, are more *joyous*, and *delightful* far, then thoſe in the *imagination* or *lower*: And as more *delightful*, ſo alſo, more *certain* and *conſtant*, will abide longer with you, then the other; *ſpiritual*, then *ſenſible Conſolations*.

Now,

Now, though you tell me, you have Both, that you want nothing that is called *comfort*, yet your *ſenſible conſolations* ſeem to me, to be moſt *predominant* in you; and that which inclines me thus to think, is your expreſſions concerning *ſighs* and *tears*, and the like, which are in the *ſenſitive* and *lower part* of the *ſoul*.

And theſe *Outward ſenſible Conſolations* are of two ſorts, (as you imply.) Either ſuch as are *comfortable*, and *joyous* in themſelves, when the *mouth is filled as it were with laughter*, the *face anointed with oyle*, and the *whole outward man danceth with chearfulneſs*:

Or elſe, ſuch as are *uncomfortable* in themſelves, but doe inſtantly bring forth the fruit of *comfort* and *joy*; as *ſighs*, and *groanes*, and *tears*: all which proceed from *grief*, and therefore are not *joyous* in themſelves, yet have *joy* and *Comfort* preſently *reſulting* from them: Though not *comfort in* them, yet *comfort* comes *with* them, and therefore they alſo are called *Conſolations*.

And *Sir*, though you now *abound* with theſe *ſenſible conſolations*, yet be pleaſed to think of *ſcarcity* and *want*, and to prepare for that time. Though you have now a moſt

a moſt pleaſant *ſerenity* in your ſoul, yet *clouds* may appear, I fear, and darken it; nay, I cannot promiſe, that you ſhall be ſecure from *ſtormes* and *tempeſts*: My prayer therefore for you ſhall be, that among the manifold changes of this life, you may never want thoſe *true ſpiritual joyes* of *God*, to whoſe grace I commend you, who am, in Him,

Your Servant.

The Third Letter.

Repreſenteth thoſe ſenſible Conſolations decreaſing, and the pious ſoul troubled thereat.

Sir,

YOur fore-warning was a *preſage* too, and it is already come to paſs; my *joy* is turned into *heavineſs*, and my *comforts* into *grief*; Summer is paſt, and tempeſtuous winter is come upon me; the Light, the light of Gods countenance is with-held from me, and darkneſs, Egyptian darkneſſe compaſſeth me round about; ſo that I goe mourning all the day long.

Heretofore I took great *delight* in the ſervice and worſhip of God; my *Prayers* were

were *refreſhments*, yea, *banquets* to me; my *Faſts* and *Humiliations*, as *corn* and *wine*, did *feaſt* and *chear* my *Heart*: By *reading*, or *hearing Gods Word*, or by *meditating* upon it, and by *receiving* the *Bleſſed Sacrament*, my *ſoul* became *young* and *luſty as an Eagle*, full of vigor, and *comfort*; But now *dryneſs* and *ſadneſs* have taken hold upon me, and *ſorrow* and *grief* overwhelm me.

In the *exerciſe* of *holy Duties*, I am ſo little affected with *comfort*, and *delight*, that I grow now *backward* to them, and *dull* and *drowſy* in them; and thoſe times which are ſet apart for the *publick* and *ſolemne worſhip* of *God*, ſeem now to me, (as the *Sabbaths* to them in *Amos*) moſt *tedious* and long.

Formerly my *ſoul* dwelt as in a *fruitful*, and *pleaſant land*, *alwayes ful* of the *comforts* of God, refreſhed *daily* with the *dew* of his *heavenly Grace*; But now it *wanders* as in a *barren*, and *dry wilderneſs*, *where no water is*; A *wilderneſs where I cannot find my God with his wonted* favour and joy; *dry*, and no water in it, not the leaſt dew from heaven to moiſten and refreſh it.

I was well aware that the delights of the

the *world* were *fading*, and *transitory*; but are these *Christian* comforts, these *holy* joyes *so* too? The fire and heat of earthly Pleasures, I have oft seen suddenly quenched; and can that from *heaven*, *heavenly*, be quenched too? *Oh that I had wings like a Dove, that I might flee away* to *those comforts and Pleasures which never fail, where there is fulness of joy, and that for evermore!*

With holy *Job*, *cap.* 23. 8. *I goe forward, but my God is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; On the left hand, and on the right hand, but He hideth himself from me.* Then with the *Spouse* in the *Canticles*, I enquire of all that pass by, *which way my Beloved was gone, and whither he was turned aside*; And while I goe *sorrowing* up and down to seek him, whom my soul loveth, the *Egyptians* (my companions formerly in sin) cry out against me, saying, *For mischief was he led away from among us, that he might perish in a wilderness*; Yea my *Grand-enemy* espies me wandering, and mocks and scofs at me. The Delights (saith he) which I formerly allowed you, *you* have *cast off*, and your new Delights have *cast off you*: where is now your God? your late *joy* and *comfort?*

And

And theſe taunts and checks (beleeve me *Sir*,) make my other afflictions moſt grievous: Put your Hand, I beſeech you, and by your *ſpiritual* Direction eaſe me, what you can; In the mean time I ſhall not ceaſe to pray, Reſtore me O Lord, to thoſe *joyes* again, and ſtabliſh me with thoſe heavenly *Comforts*, for which I deſire your frequent prayers alſo; for I am

Your ſad Friend.

The Anſwer.

Directeth ſome means how the Pious ſoul may regain thoſe ſenſible conſolations; Or if not, reaſons alleaged why ſhe ſhould ſatisfie her ſelf without them.

Sir,

YOurs I received, and as I rejoyced before with you, when you did rejoyce, ſo now I mourn with you who mourn; and to take off ſome part of the grief from you, and my ſelf, I embrace the firſt opportunity of writing, that I might in the beginning of your malady apply ſomewhat for it:

You

You aggravate your *preſent grief* and *ſadneſs*, by reflecting much upon your *former Comforts*, and *Delights*, which is in effect to put thoſe *Comforts* into the wrong *ſcale*: they ſhould ſerve to *counter-poize* your preſent *ſorrow*, and *dryneſs*; not to *weigh with* them, in *one*, and the *ſame* ſcale, but to *weigh againſt* them, in the *other*: and your Argument ſhould be as *Jobs*; *I have received good things at the hand of God, and ſhall I not receive evill?* I have had a very liberal portion of the *ſweetneſs* of the honey, for ſome years together, and ſhall I think much to taſte of a little *Wormwood* and *bitterneſs*, for a few dayes? If you put *that* in the *one* ſcale, *this* in the *other*, it will be ſome eaſe to you.

But for the particular *Malady* which you complain of, I can but gueſs what your Diſeaſe is; and if I gueſs amiſs, what I preſcribe, I revoke beforehand; onely if I find out your *Diſeaſe*, you may follow my directions for the *cure*, or the *eaſe* of it.

In this beginning of your *Diſquiet*, I ſhall preſume, That you want onely thoſe *ſenſible Conſolations*, not thoſe *ſpiritual*; thoſe in the *lower* part of the *ſoul*, the *ſenſitive faculties*, not theſe in the *upper faculties*, of the *will* and *underſtanding*; and therefore

fore your first task wil be, to consider, whether these *sensible* and *outward Consolations* fail you, by reason of some *natural cause* in your self, your *Body* not so fitly disposed now, to *receive* the *impressions* of joy, nor the *imagination*, to *form* them, as formerly: Or by some *supernatural cause*, God *withdrawing* these *sensible Consolations* from you.

However, whether the cause be *Natural*, or *Supernatural*, the disease brings the *soul* to a great deal of perplexity and disquiet, and afterwards into dangerous hazards, and therefore some directions I shal prescribe.

Begin (it is best) with somewhat *inwardly*. Whereas you complain of your *heavines* in *holy duties*, prepare your self for them, more solemnly then ordinarily, with a most *serious* meditation of *God*, to whom, and in whose presence, you are to perform those duties; Make some impression in your heart, of his most glorious Majesty, and most dreadful presence; and quicken this your meditation by recounting his infinite goodnes and mercy; and specifie his mercies to your own soul; and this wil dispose you (I hope) to that *enlargement* of heart, and *tenderness*, which

you

you complain you want: the *outward expreſſions* of *Love*.

If not, then to a *ſadder* meditation upon the *ſevere juſtice*, and righteouſneſs of God, reflecting all that while, upon your *own vileneſſe*, and upon the bitterneſs of thoſe puniſhments which you have deſerved; the due conſideration of this, wil conduce much to thoſe other *outward* expreſſions of *grief and ſorrow*.

Repreſent God to your ſelf, as a moſt mercifull *Father*, as a moſt ſevere *Judge*, and as a moſt glorious and powerful *King*; and ſurely either *Love*, or *Grief*, or *Fear*, wil bring forth ſome of your wonted *ſenſible Conſolations*.

And then preſent your ſupplications to that *glorious*, that *merciful*, that *juſt God*, and beſeech for this *tenderneſs* of *ſpirit*.

And with theſe *inwards*, apply *outwardly* Reverent proſtrations, *humbly falling down*, & *kneeling* before his dreadfull Majeſty *ſmiting* your *breſt*, with the *Publican*, and then *lifting up your hands*, *and your eyes unto heaven*; and ſo to your other Devotions; which, though *ſecret*, with your ſelf alone, yet if *Vocal* (in this caſe) you will be more likely to be affected outward-

outwardly at them: To which, you may adde, *singing* of *spiritual songs*, both with *voice* and *instrument*; 1 *Sam.* 16. 23. 2 *Kings* 3. 16. you may read of greater matters, helped forward (to say the least) with *Musick* and *Instruments*.

These, and some such other means *outwardly* applied, (I will doubt not) restore you (by the grace of God) to your former health and *comfort*: Neither inward nor outward means must be neglected; not *inward*, because these *comforts* are the *gift* of God, and must be obtained by prayer: not these outward, because the *Consolations* which you labour to re-gain, are *outward* and *sensible*, and therefore probably to be moved and stirred up in us, by our *outward* Actions, and deportment of body.

Other means to this purpose, you may read of in your Books, and some you may suggest to your self; for you best know your own temper of body and soul, and therefore can prompt your self, what may be fit to be done; especially if you can recollect, *what thoughts* and imaginations were wont to raise them in you, then you will use *those* again, as a ready means to recover them.

But

But, if notwithſtanding all theſe *means* uſed, you *continue* ſtil in this ſtate of *Drineſs*, & *Barrenneſs*, & are no ways able to regain your former *conſolations*, be not, I pray, ſo much *dejected* (as you ſeem) for wāt of them, for this is to *diſquiet your ſelfe in vain*.

In *vain* (I ſay) becauſe you cannot *adde one cubit to your ſtature*, your ſolicitouſneſs cannot help you; Nay this diſquiet puls you lower ſtil and lower; It is ſo far from *exalting* you towards *Comfort*, that it *depreſſes* you with deeper *ſadneſs* and *grief*; It *thickens* the *darkneſs*, not *diſpels* it.

But chiefly it is in *vain*, becauſe theſe *ſenſible Conſolations* are not *tanti*; not ſo much worth; *Good* & *profitable* they are, becauſe they make us *cheerful* and *plentiful* in the *work* of the *Lord*, but they are not *ſo good*, nor *ſo abſolutely profitable*, as that you ſhould be ſo ſorely diſmayed and dejected for the loſs and want of them. And this is a *chief* thing in this *ſubject* of *Conſolations*, and moſt *ſeriouſly* to be conſidered.

Devotion doth not conſiſt in theſe *outward* and *ſenſible Conſolations*, but in a *ready*, *active will* and *purpoſe* to *conform* our ſelves *inwardly* and *outwardly* to the *holy pleaſure*, and *commands of God*, and as occaſion is given, *executing the will of*

God, and obeying his Laws; this, this is pure Devotion. The *outward Comforts* (we ſpeak of) are brought forth by *this, this* is the *Mother, they* are but *Daughters*: and *they* are *cheriſhed* by this too, as the *Daughter* by the *Mother*; however, ſometimes it comes to paſs, that as dutiful *Daughters*, they *comfort* and *relieve* the *languiſhing Mother*; *Devotion*, (the *Mother* it ſelf) is otherwhile ſupported by theſe *Conſolations*.

Seeing then, the main and chief part of *Devotion* may be in the *ſoul* of *Man*, without the *ſenſible feeling*, and *outward Comfort* of it, if we have the *Principal*, let us be therewith content; if *this* be preſent, though *the other* be abſent, it is not ſo deeply to be bewailed: There are (I perſwade my ſelf) many *Saints* (in a high degree of glory) in Heaven, who never taſted here of theſe *outward Conſolations*.

It is a common errour to think that thoſe *exercciſes* of *Gods worſhip*, which we perform with *theſe outward Conſolations*, are alway more acceptable to God, then *thoſe* which *affect* us not this way.

To us indeed they are moſt acceptable, becauſe of the *delight* which we have in ſuch *ſoftneſs* and *tenderneſs* of *heart*; but thoſe we perform in the *dryneſs* of our

Souls

Souls may be as acceptable to *God*, as theſe: for God, who looks upon both the inward and outward man, regards the *Heart*, and *Spiritual* parts, more then the *Bodily*, and the *Senſitive* parts.

Yea, oftentimes *theſe* are more acceptable to God, then *thoſe*; and the reaſon of it is this. Thoſe *Prayers* and *holy Duties* which we perform in our *drineſs*, (notwithſtanding we want the *Comfort* of them) are preſumed to proceed from a more *vigorous will*: That *Heart* is more fully ſet upon the diſcharge of theſe *Duties*, which performs them *without* theſe *outward comforts*, then that which performs them onely, *with them*: Here is no ſtream of *Comfort* to carry you on in your *Duties*, and if notwithſtanding, you goe on as faſt, and as firm, as if they were, your *Heart* is full of *vigour*, and *active reſolution*, and therefore theſe *Duties* are moſt acceptable to God, and argue a very great love of God, and of his ſervice.

Wherefore, if all means being uſed to *keep*, or to *recover* theſe *ſenſible Conſolations*, you ſpeed not, be not dejected at it: But in that caſe, *reſign* your *ſelf*, and your *deſires* and *delights* wholly to *God*; if he pleaſes to afford *them*, uſe *them*, and improve your ſelf

(as much as may be) by *them*; If God still denies *them*, improve your self *without* them; and though *outward Comforts* decay, yet let the *inward* abound in you. Which you may most probably effect, if you continue resolute, and constant in all *holy Exercises* of Religion, and perform them all as duly, as heretofore, though now you have no sweetness, nor pleasant taste in them. For which I commend you to the mercy, and grace of God, in whom I am

Your servant.

The fourth Letter.

Representeth the pious soul wholly deprived of sensible Consolations; and spirituall Consolations decreasing in her.

Sir,

I Apply my self to no other ghostly director, and thereupon your trouble returns so quick; I thank you for your last letters, whereby I perceive that you have found out my *disease*, and therefore I was most diligent in observing your prescriptions; the bitterest pil is that in your last line, *that I should be as constant, and as ful in my devotions and exercises of holy Duties in this my driness, and barrenness, as ever I was heretofore amidst my great-*

teſt Comforts and Conſolations. This ſeems a very hard duty, and (to return your own expreſſion) as difficult, as to ſail *without* a ſtream, (yea, and without *winde* too) as faſt as *with* it: I have no *ſtream* of *Comfort* at all in my *Devotions*, no comfortable blaſt of the Spirit, to ſet me forward, and a heavy load of *dulneſs* and *drowſineſs*, to retard me, and yet I muſt make as quick a diſpatch, as when I had no ſuch impediment againſt me, and a full ſtream for me: Yet for theſe late weeks, I have ſet my ſelf ſtrictly to obſerve that, and your other directions; But alas *Sir*, the more I ſtruggle with my diſeaſe, the more it encreaſeth upon me; My *God ſheweth* me not the *light* of his *countenance*, but *hideth* his *face* more and more from me.

I was driven from the Land of *Canaan*, where I had an affluence of *Milk* and *Honey*, a full and conſtant poſſeſſion of *heavenly comforts*, yet for a while I was ſuffered to abide, as on the Mountain of *Piſgah*, where though I had not that *meaſure*, nor that *conſtantneſs* of comforts, as before, yet a *glimpſe* now and then of that *Canaan* was afforded to me; But now it is far worſe with me, I ſeem confined to a low *vally*, whence I cannot eſpy the leaſt

part of that *Canaan*; no degree of heavenly *comfort* allowed me; and therefore, *Sir*, I have reason to conclude that this is a *desertion* not onely of *outward sensible consolation*, but also of *inward* and *spiritual*: my *sufferings* abound *outwardly*, and no *consolations inwardly*; The *reasonable faculties* of my *soul*, my *understanding* and my *will*, want their wonted *light* and *joy*.

Yea, while I relate it, this *spiritual desertion* growes upon me; and though the other day, it was but a *partial privation* of comfort, the *degrees* of joy abated onely, in me, yet now it is a *total privation* of *joy* and *comfort*, for I am wholly bereft both of *sensible*, and *spiritual consolation*; my *sensitive*, and my *reasonable faculties*, all of them, full of *darkness*, and *dulness*, and *barrenness*; and therefore, *Sir*, I beseech you dispatch some further directions to *Your languishing friend*.

The Answer.

Distinguisheth between a desertion of grace, and of comfort; and that this *may be inflicted by God, in love, on the best Saints on Earth; and for what reasons.*

Sir,

YOurs I received, and think not strange that your disease should *continue*, yea *encrease* upon you. There

There is a *Spiritual desertion* of *Grace*, and a *Spiritual desertion* of *Comfort*: The first, when *God* withdraws his *holy Spirit* and *divine Grace* from us, for some notorious sin committed against him. This latter, when he withdraws onely the *joy*, and *comfort* of that *Grace* which is still with us.

And this latter kind of *Spiritual desertion*, may be in the best Saints of God, upon Earth; I may desire, but I cannot hope (upon good grounds) any of them should be alway freed from it.

Now, *Sir*, this *spiritual desertion* of *comfort*, is inflicted upon us, one while in Gods *displeasure*: we neglect those *comforts* too much, or by some other sin, or infirmity, we provoke God, to call in those mercies, and to withhold them from us.

Otherwhile they may be withdrawn by God, and yet *not* in his *displeasure*; the *Sun* of righteousnes may be as *bright*, behinde the cloud, though not so *evident* to us; Gods countenance may shine towards you, when it is thus intercepted from you.

Now whether God hath withdrawn *these comforts* from you in his *displeasure* against you, as a punishment for some sin, or otherwise, I cannot pretend to discover; upon examination of your self, you

will be able to diſcover it, and to inform your ſelf; And if it ſhall appear to you that this *deſertion* is not inflicted upon you, in diſpleaſure, then though both *ſenſible*, and *ſpiritual conſolations* be denied you, and that *totally*, you need no ſalve (I trow) for that *ſore*: It is the Lord, let him doe what ſeemeth good in his ſight.

If thus, you may happily diſcover ſome greater *mercies* coming towards you, with this your *drineſs* and *barrenneſs*. This *Spiritual deſertion* may be inflicted upon you, either *Ob charitatis profectum*, as an incentive to love; God will hereby ſtir up a greater *love* in your *ſoul*, towards him, then formerly. He takes away theſe *comforts* from you becauſe you loved them too much; And he would abate your *love* towards theſe *comforts*, that it might be beſtowed more fully upon the *Comforter* himſelf: If God will not have any *love* of *yours* run waſte upon *conſolations*, but elevate *it all* to *himſelf*, you have no more reaſon to complain, then the *Childe*, from whom the *Nurſe* is withdrawn that the *Mother* might gain its chiefeſt affections: Or ſuppoſing God beſtowed *comforts* (eſpecially thoſe *ſenſible*) on you, becauſe of the infirmity of your condition, but now hath ſtrengthned

you

you to subsist without them, you have no more reason to complain, then the *Cripple* that is healed, for the loss of his *Crutches*.

Or Secondly, this *Spiritual desertion* may be inflicted upon you *Ob humilitatis custodiam*, as a *preservative* against *pride*: that *humility* may *grow* more in you; a *Thorn in the flesh, lest you should be exalted above measure with the abundance of heavenly Consolations*; and if so, who will complain, though the *honey*, & the *honycomb* be taken away from him, when he hath eaten sufficient, and is in danger to surfeit by the rest?

Or for some other special *vertue*, which God will now conveigh into your *Soul*. Thus some *Spiritual* advantage you may hope to gain, by this your *desertion*.

But on the other side, if upon examination it appears, or be probable, that God hath withdrawn these *Consolations* from you in *displeasure*, then you know your task is to enquire into your self, for what sin, or neglect, or omission it is, that God is so displeased with you; and, when that is discovered, an unfained *humiliation* for it, and an earnest *endeavour* against it, for the time to come, is required at your hands.

Yet, after this *examination*, if you re-

main ſtill doubtfull of the true cauſe of your *deſertion*, ſo that you cannot reaſonably enjoin your ſelf, a *ſpecial humiliation* for any particular ſin, as the *Actor*, or as acceſſory in it, a *general Humiliation* for your ſins and corruptions, will certainly advantage you, and may probably eaſe you, in this your preſent condition. And to this examination, together with that *particular* (if you find cauſe) or this *general Humiliation*, I now leave you, earneſtly praying, *that by theſe, or ſome other means, you may be healed, and ſin no more. Sir*, I am

Your ſervant in our Lord Jeſus.

The fift Letter.

The pious ſoul lamenteth the loſſe of her Comforts, as taken away in Gods diſpleaſure; & propoſeth an abatement of worldly comfort, as a means to recover Spiritual.

Sir,

UPon a *view* of my Actions ſince the laſt ſolemn *Humiliation* of my ſoul, I find many *defects* and *failings*; and though I cannot charge my ſelf with any one notorious ſin unrepented of, (bleſſed be God my upholder) yet while I am compaſſed about with ſo many *infirmities* and *imperfections*, *negligences* and *ignorances*, I cannot but

but fear, too probably, that for ſome of thoſe it is, that God, in *diſpleaſure*, withdraws thoſe his *comforts* from me.

And can there be a greater heart-ſore then this, that my deareſt *comforts* ſhould be taken away, yea driven away, from my ſelf, by my ſelf! That I my ſelf ſhould be ſo deeply acceſſory to all thoſe *deſertions* I complain of! That I my ſelf ſhould quench thoſe holy *fires*, and then complain for want of the *warmth* and *comfort* of them! That I ſhould provoke God to hide his face, and to withdraw the light of his countenance from me, which a value infinitely more then all the pleaſures, and profits, and honors of this world!

And now if I be conſtrained to dwell in this *Meſech*, and to have my habitations in theſe dark Tents of *Kedar*, what will my life profit me! I will not return to the pleaſures of the world, and what is my life then, if theſe *Pleaſures* of heaven return not unto me!

Lord, can I not ſee thy face, and enjoy the light of thy countenance, conſtantly, and live! Is it not then far better for me to die with it, then to live without it! This *thy loving kindneſſe is better then life it ſelf*, Pſal. 63. 4. *therefore I will ſtill ſeek thy face, thy*

face

face Lord will I ſeek. Oh let me ſee it, and enjoy it again, though I die for it! Yet if if it be thy will, my God and my Lord, that I walk all the dayes of my life in this *darkneſs*, that with theſe *diſconſolate fears* and *tremblings I work out my ſalvation*, *Loe I am ready to doe thy will O God.*

Now, *Sir*, for the particular account you may expect from me of mine *examination* of my ſelf, I muſt not conceal from you, that I have ſome jealouſies, that worldly-mindedneſs may be ſhrewdly acceſſory to this my *deſertion*: I am too buſily (I fear) imployed in the things of this world, to have and retain that portion of heavenly comfort; I traffick too much on this ſide *Jordan*, to have thoſe ſweets of the Land of *Canaan*.

That of our Apoſtle, 2 *Tim.* 2. 4. *Nemo militans Deo*, no man that warreth under God, entangleth himſelf with the affaires of this world, is not (I conceive) proper to the Clergie, and Divines, but a general rule for all Chriſtians alſo, whoſoever fights under Chriſts banner, againſt the world, the fleſh, and the Devill, muſt not be entangled with the things of this life. And though, *Sir*, I cannot charge my ſelf with ſinne, in this kinde,

being

being entangled beyond the bounds of lawfulneſs, with earthly things, yet I conſider, that my worldly employments, though lawfull, may not be expedient; for I have read in my books of Devotion, that whoſoever takes his full lawfull pleaſure in the things of this world, to ſuch an one, God (commonly, and moſt juſtly) denies the extraordinary pleaſures and delights of his Spirit; and one way preſcribed, not to be ſcanted in theſe *ſpiritual comforts*, is by abating ſomewhat of the full lawfull meaſure of theſe *worldly comforts*. The neglect of this I fear, may be one reaſon why God withdrawes his wonted ſpiritual *comforts* from me.

If I could abridge my ſelf a little more of that delight I take in the ſtudy of Hiſtorie, Philoſophie and the like; if I could abate ſome little of that comfort I ſolace my ſelf with, in friends and children; if I could be a little more ſtraitned in theſe *worldly comforts*, I ſhould well hope to be enlarged again, in thoſe *ſpiritual comforts*: I ſhall therefore labour to ſatisfie my ſelf with ſome few *Omers* of worldly joy, though an *Ephah* be but a lawful meaſure; who knoweth but God may turn my former *Omer* of ſpiritual

joy,

joy, into an *Ephah*, and give it me, heaped up, and running over? I read of some who have sped thus by it, and therefore I shall hope for the like mercy from God, and this hope is some support to

Your fainting friend.

The Answer.

Adviseth to love the Comforter himself more then the Comforts.

Sir,

YOu delight (it seems) in *Corrosives*, (as most in your condition doe) more then in *Cordials*; you insist onely upon Gods *displeasure* against you, in taking away your *Consolations*, not at all reflecting upon the *Cordial*, that these may be taken away in *love*.

Yea, though God be offended with you for your many failings and imperfections; yet an offended God (how e're it is with an offended friend) may afflict in *love*. Now, after you have cast down your soul by *Humiliation*, raise it up, I pray, by the *meditation of this*, Your *Love*, that most precious & excellent affection of your *Soul*, shall by this *desertion* be advanced to God, and appropriated to him alone. Then you may see how weak that Love is, when we

love

love God onely, or chiefly for that parcel of *Mercy*, or *comfort* which he is pleased to communicate to us; and that the *strength* of love is, to love that infinite *mercifulness*, and incomprehensible *goodness*, that is in *him*; to love God more for that *Ocean* in himself, then for these few *drops* he sheds down upon us; for his own *goodnesse*, more then for our *benefit*, or *comfort* by it: this, this is the *strength* of *love*. And if your former *comforts* hindred you from this love of God, your present *desertion* may further you to it; & when it hath strengthened your *Love*, it will encrease your *Humility* also; Gods *chearful* countenance towards you may (unhappily) *exalt* you, but you cannot but walk *humbly* before a *frowning* God: And where this *love*, and this *humility* is, patience will have its perfect work. Which I speak the rather of, becaufe this *drought* and *barrennesse* of our *Souls* may through the corruption of our Nature, and the temptation of the Devill, occasion some *impatience* in us. As an Antidote therefore against impatience, I beseech you to consider that there are many dear children of God, who never tasted at all of those *Comforts*, whereof you have had store; and then you wil turn your *com-*

plaints

plaints for the preſent want of them, into *Praiſes* for your former enjoyment of them; and after that *Hymn* of *thanksgiving*, you may cloſe your Meditations, and Devotions, with a *Collect* or two, that *God would call to remembrance his tender mercies, and his loving kindneſs which he hath ſhewed to you* heretofore; In which I ſhall be a joynt-ſuitor with you, but eſpecially for all *Spiritual Graces* which are needful for you, and ſo I reſt

Yours in our Lord Chriſt.

The ſixth Chapter.

The pious ſoul ſtill lamenteth the loſs of her Comforts, yet wholly reſigneth her deſires of them to Gods will.

Sir,

I Peruſe your *directions* daily, for I am ſtill in my *diſconſolate* condition, my *drineſs*, my *drineſs*, woe is me! I cannot diſſemble it. Thoſe *Comforts* have held up my weary hands, in *prayer*, they have ſtrengthened my feeble knees, in the publike *Congregation*, in my private *cloſet*, meditating in the *field*, and on my *bed*, at all times, and upon all occaſions, they have been my companions, and my ſupporters alſo. They have made me more forward

forward in *Chriſtian duties*, more cheerful in them, and more plentiful of them, then otherwiſe I fear I ſhould have been; but now they have all forſaken me, and I am left weak: Heretofore how freely could I reſigne up my ſelf to God, and his ſervice? when I conſider it onely, as a yeelding up my ſelf to a continual affluence of Heavenly comforts and pleaſures; How eaſie was it for me to deſpiſe the delights and vanities of this world, when I abounded with thoſe? And who can part with ſuch boſom-friends, who have been ſo helpfull and beneficial, and not complain? The loſs of the *pleaſure*, and *delight* I took in them, was grievous, but this loſs of *help* and aſſiſtance from them is an heavy burthen.

But theſe very *helps* & advantages which I have had by *conſolations*, may come (you have told me) without them; yea, ſometimes theſe their proper works may be performed, better without *them*, then with *them*; And that is it I enquire after now. I bleſs God that he hath afforded me that *comfort* and *help* of thoſe *pleaſures*, thus far onward in my way, and I truſt to him now for other *guides* and *helps*.

And hereupon I reſolve (Gods grace aſſiſting me) to caſt off my ſolicitous, and anxious

anxious care about *them*; Deſire *them* I ſhall and ſeek *them*, becauſe I can be *helped* by *them*, but after that (if I finde *them* not) I ſhall not complain ſo loud, becauſe I truſt to be *helped* without *them*; And I ſhall cloſe thoſe *Collects* (you adviſe to) for theſe Conſolations, with *Non mea, ſed Tua, fiat voluntas, Domine*, Not mine O Lord, but thy will be done: for though I be denied *them*, yet in my drineſs will I continue my *ſervice* (ſuch as it is) to thee my God, and by thy grace perſevere in it to my lives end. For the performance of which, I deſire the benefit of your prayers, whereby you ſhall ſtill oblige *Your engaged friend.*

The Anſwer.

A Caution, leſt the ſoul, being now indifferent whether ſhe hath Comfort or not, ſhould prove ſlothful in holy Duties.

Sir,

I Beſeech God to ſtrengthen you in your humble, and free ſubmiſſion unto his bleſſed will; and though he ſtill hide his countenance from you, yet you promiſe to ſerve him, to bring him what your *dulneſs* and *barrenneſs* will allow you to have, and from him you ſhall receive, what you have not; if not your *former*, yet ſome *other*

helps

helps and ſupplies; yea, the Lord himſelf will be your *Companion* and your *Guide*: Caſt all your care upon him, and he will take the full care of you: And if he leads you no further by the glimmering light of a *Star* (your own Conſolations and delights) it is (I hope) becauſe he will ſhew you the bright luſtre of the *Sun* it ſelf, that *goodneſs* and *mercifulneſs* which is in himſelf, and by that lead you, and guide you to your journies end.

And concerning thoſe *prayers*, and holy *exerciſes*, which you perform to God, in this your *barrenneſs* and *drought*, ſeeing *they* are not undertaken at all for any *taſte*, or *ſweetneſſe* you have in *them*, but purely to ſerve God, and meerly and alone to perform his will, ſurely *they* are very acceptable in his ſight: I know *this barrenneſſe* is ſeldome without objections againſt the performance of theſe *duties*, as if *they* might be as well left undone, as done; But you will be able (I hope) to anſwer all thoſe oppoſitions, and contradictions, and force your will, againſt your will, to goe on ſtill in diſcharging thoſe holy *duties*, as wel as you can, and as chearfully, though not ſo well as you would.

There goes alway along with theſe our

Con-

Conſolations, ſelf-love, and ſometime too much of it too; It will concern us therefore to moderate it; to that purpoſe, when we purpoſe to our ſelves, the exerciſe of any *duties*, or the practiſe of any Chriſtian *vertues*, our own intereſt, pleaſure, or advantage (ſpiritual though they be) muſt be the leaſt things we aime at, leſt ſelf-reſpects blemiſh all. And if thus (though in the depth of *deſertion*) our love is more commendable, and thoſe duties and *vertues* more acceptable to God, for whoſe ſake wholly we perform them, then thoſe *exerciſes* and *duties* we formerly had ſo much comfort in; and upon this *reaſon* I ſtill adviſe you, not to ſet too high an eſteem upon theſe *Conſolations*, your own delights.

Yet here I think fit to enter a *Caveat* or two. I have known *Torpor* and *Acedia*, indevotion and ſluggiſhneſs come under this vaile; while we pretend not to affect theſe our own *delights*, *coldneſs* in our *Prayers*, and *lazineſs* in our *Devotions* too commonly creep in upon us. Take heed therefore that you retain your inward *fervor* and ſpirituall *zeal*, in the midſt of your *drineſs*, and *barrenneſs*; you muſt beware leſt you loſe your *fervor*, as well as the

ſenſe

ſenſe, and the *Comfort of it*. Let not your *intention* and *attention* in your *Devotions* any whit abate (if poſſibly you can prevent it) while your outward *Conſolations* are denied to you. It is a chief deſign the Devill hath upon us in theſe our *deſertions*, to make us *weary* of the ſervice of God, and to ſteal away from us our *Devotions*, and our *fervor* too.

And now ſeeing you have attained (God be thanked) to ſuch a condition and ſtate, that you ſubmit your ſelf wholly to God, and will be content, though he ſtill withhold theſe your *Conſolations*, this is a time, that the *Devil* is ordinarily buſie to dart in thoſe his *temptations*; And if he can bring in, with this your *indifferency*, *oſcitancy*, and *coldneſs*, in thoſe *ſervices* you perform, and a *lazineſs* in holy *Duties*, he gains too much upon you.

A ſecond *Caveat* I ſhall adde, with reſpect to others, rather then to your ſelf at preſent; That they who *abound* with theſe *Comforts*, be not too *ſecure*, upon the ground of *Conſolations* (eſpecially if they be *ſenſible* ones onely, that their perſons and performances are accepted with God; that they make not theſe the (τὸ κριτήριον) chief *trial* and teſtimony of

of their *Justification* and *Sanctification*; the *testimony* of their *Faith* and *Repentance* cannot deceive them, these *Consolations* may.

But all this is added, *ex superabundanti*; Since your full *resignation* of your *desires* and *delights* to God, and your indifferency for these Consolations, this advise might have been spared: nothing is now necessary from me, but my prayers to God for you, wherein I shall never fail you, for I am *Your servant in Christ Jesu.*

The Seventh Letter.

The soul feeleth (as she conceives) a partial privation of grace, and growing suspicion of the sincerity of her faith and repentance, fearing a total privation of grace in her.

Sir,

THat intimation of yours, that your advise to me might be spared hereafter, hath these many moneths kept back my hand from writing to you, but now I can withhold no longer, and your former trouble breaks in upon you.

Not that I have revoked my *resignation* of those my *Consolations*, to Gods blessed will, far be it from me; But in another matter, (as I conceive) and of higher concernment, I now make my address to you, for *direction* and *comfort*. That

That *total privation* of *comfort*, under which I have ſo long laboured, hath now at length brought on me (I fear) a *Partial* privation of *Grace*. My *ſenſible comforts* are gone, and my *ſpiritual comforts* are ſtil detained from me, and now I doubt that even *grace* it ſelf, is decaying too; *Joſeph* is not, and *Simeon* is not, and ſhall I loſe my *Benjamin* alſo? all theſe things are againſt me.

Sir, I have endeavoured what I could to keep my ſoul *vigilant*, and my affections erect, and *attent* at *Prayers*, (according to your caution to me) but now they all ſlack, and a general *drowſineſs* duls them all, at the houre of prayer, more then at any other time, at that ſpirituall, more then at any civil employments; And thereupon I complain, that the *grace* of *fervor* and *zeal* is departed from me; and in other holy *duties* the *chearfulneſs*, and *ardor* I was wont to have, doth now wholly fail me.

When I read of ſome of the ſervants of God, who were ſo elevated in their *Devotions*, and *Meditations*, that *whether in the Body, or out of the Body, God onely knowes*; and then reflect upon mine, now adaies ſo *heartleſs*, and ſo dul, that whether with the *ſoul*, or without the *ſoul*, it is hard to

ſay;

say; that while I am at those holy *exercises*, my *soul* should be carried any whither, rather then into *heaven*, yea, *downward* rather then *upward*, this presseth me sore. How can such service be *reasonable* from me, who have a *spiritual soul*? or *acceptable* to God, who is a *Spirit*, and must be worshipped in *Spirit*? This I lament as a *privation* of that *grace* of *Fervor*, and *zeal*; My *soul* is not filled with *it* now, as formerly.

Neither may I dissemble it, sometimes I fear *worse*, even a *total* privation of *this*, and of all other *graces*, and *vertues*; Either that God hath withdrawn his holy *graces* from me, or else that I was never truly partaker of *them*; that I flattered, and deceived my self, when I hoped that God had accepted my *Faith* in Christ, and my *Repentance* to my *justification*.

The other day while I was judging my self for my sins, an *allegation* was cast in, against my *Repentance* also, and that was accused of *unsincerity*, and *hypocrisie*; And proof was brought in of it; My *grief* and sorrow for my *sins*, was compared with my *sorrow* for *other* things; The small *bottle* of my *penitential tears* was brought forth and set by the *bottle* of my *tears*, for world-

ly croſſes; and it appeared how *enlarged* I had been in theſe, and how *ſtraitned* in thoſe; that I have *wept* far more for the loſs of a friend, or of a penſion for ſome yeares, then for the invaluable loſs of my Lord God, eternally; And this plea was proſecuted againſt me, with a great deal of importunity; and though I my ſelf was both the *advocate* & the *judge*, in the caſe, yet I could not be ſo partiall, either in *pleading*, or in *determining*, as to *acquit* my ſelf; But upon this *proof* and *evidence* was forced to *condemn* that *repentance* (mine own though it were) as *feigned* and *unſincere*, or *incompleat* at leaſt, and therefore *unacceptable* in the ſight of God.

And upon this, how *heavy* and *ſad* my guilty *ſoul* is, cannot be expreſſed; ſince this my *Benjamin* is miſcarried too, *ſorrow will ſoon bring me to the grave.*

And then, when I am thus low, it is hard to keep my ſelf from ſinking lower; for *allegations* I find produced againſt my *Faith* and my *Love* to God: and thus it is reaſoned. If I have not true *faith*, all I have done yet, is ſtill *fruitleſs*, I am ſtill in my *unregenerate* condition; But if I have not true *love* to God, I have not true *Faith*, and if I have not *joy* in God,

I have not *love* of him. These are fruits of the same *Spirit*, and where one is, *the other* cannot be wanting; *Love* results naturally from *Faith*, and *Joy* from *Love*, and they continually accompany each other; these *fruits* are alway in a *cluster*: or they are all links of one chain, if any one link be taken off, the chain is quite broken: Seeing then apparently I want *Joy*, how can I have *Love*? and if I have no *Love*, *I am not better then a sounding Brass and a tinkling Cymbal.*

Alas *Sir* I cannot alway keep these *Allegations* against my self, out of the *court* of my *Conscience*; And though I *condemn* my self very often, yet I dare not be too peremptory, in these *judgements* against my self, for I cannot but *hope better things*: And whether I should cherish those *fears* (which are strong already) or these weaker *hopes*, is that, wherein I desire your advise and counsel; And the Lord, who onely knoweth the *spirits* of men, direct you in it: this is the prayer of

Your assured friend.

The

The Answer.

Preſcribeth a ſtrict examination of her Faith and Repentance: and ſheweth theſe feares and jealouſies may be the Temptations of the Devill.

Sir,

WHether you ſhould take part with *Fear* or *Hope*, you your ſelf muſt reſolve: yet ſomewhat I ſhall ſay, concerning the *feares* which ariſe in you, that you are not *juſtified* before *God*, nor *reconciled* to *him*.

It is good to fear alway; it keeps us *low*, leſt *pride* enter; and it keeps us *active*, leſt *ſloth* ſeize upon us; and ſo we humbly labour to make our *Calling* and *Election* ſure; and when I ſadly conſider, how many miſcarry through Spiritual *ſecurity*, not at all ſuffering themſelves to miſtruſt their condition towards God, I am not forward to caſt out *fear*: Yet there is *torment* in *fear*, and a firm *hope*, well grounded, (if it ejects not fear it ſelf) will wholly allay the *torment* of it.

Whether your *Faith* and *Repentance* were as they ought to be, is between God, and your own ſoul: But if your *faith* were *lively*, with *love*, and truſt in *God*, and your *repentance unfeigned*, aſſure your ſelf, it

was no other *Spirit* but the holy *Spirit* of *God*, (who can neither deceive us, nor can be deceived) who ſaid unto your ſoul, *Chriſtus & juſtitia tua, & ſalus tua*; *Chriſt is thy juſtification, and thy ſalvation.*

And for the *Plea* put in againſt your *Repentance*, though I cannot diſcern what your *Repentance* is, yet this I can diſcern, that your *objection*, is no convincing *argument* againſt the *Truth* and *ſincerity* of it.

For though I muſt grant that the inward *ſorrow* for *ſin*, and the inward *ſorrow* for *worldly* loſſes, are both from the *heart*, and *griefs* both of the ſame kind, yet it will not follow, that they both ſhould have the ſame *outward expreſſions*; For there may be an *heart* ful of true *ſorrow* for *ſin*, where there is no *ſad countenance*, no *trembling lips*, nor *weeping eyes*; theſe are the *overflowings* of *grief* in the *ſenſitive* parts, and are more readily, and more fully ſhewed by us, for *worldly*, then for *ſpirituall* matters: and the reaſon is this; Becauſe theſe *ſenſitive* parts, (whence they proceed) are more affected with *bodily* and *worldly* things, then they are (or can be) with *ſpiritual*, and *heavenly*; and the reaſon of this,

this, is, becauſe *worldly* things are *neer* theſe *ſenſitive* parts, whereas *ſpiritual*, are *far off*; and thereupon have a greater command over outward *ſenſitive* expreſſions, (as *tears* and the like) then *ſpiritual* things can have over them, at a diſtance.

I deſire therefore that you would examine your *ſorrow* for *ſin*, *above*, not *beneath*; at the *ſpring-head* of *ſorrow*, your *heart*, *and reaſonable ſoul*, not at theſe *neather pools*, your *eyes*, and the *tears* of them; by that you cannot eaſily be deceived, by theſe you may.

And if upon *examination*, you find that your *heart* hath been, and is truly *humbled for your ſins*, and afflicted at the remembrance of them; and doth alſo firmly *reſolve* againſt *them* for the time to come; if you be ſorely *diſpleaſed*, both with the *ſinner*, and with the *ſin*, abhorring *your ſelf*, & *your tranſgreſſion*, you may *cheriſh* and *confirm* your *hopes*, that *God is reconciled to you through Chriſt*. If you can produce theſe *rational teſtimonies* (which are grounded upon the *Word* of God) be not I pray very ſolicitous for the *teſtimony* of your *ſenſitive faculties*.

And after the *examination* of your *ſorrow* for ſin, if you think fit to be ſo ſtrict

with your ſelf, as to require that this your *grief* for *ſin*, ſhould exceed that your *grief* for *worldly* things; yet it is very unreaſonable, and againſt all rules of *Courts*, to *condemn* your *ſorrow* for ſin as defective, upon the bare *teſtimony* of theſe *outward expreſſions*; for as they are a *ſingle witneſs*, ſo (now it appears to you) they are a *partial witneſs* too, enclining more to *ſorrow* for *worldly* things (and giving fuller *evidence* for them) then to *ſorrow* for *ſpiritual* things: and therefore till it be otherwiſe *proved*, and fully too, that your *ſorrow* for ſin, is *unſincere*, paſs not I pray, your ſentence of *Condemnation* upon it.

And yet before you need *acquit* it, you may examine the neighbouring *Paſſions* of your *ſoul*, about this very matter of *your reconciliation with God*. If there appear no *unſincerity*, or *hypocriſie*, in your *love* of God, and in your *hatred* of ſin, you have little reaſon to ſuſpect your *repentance*: And for trial of the ſincerity of theſe *Paſſions*, I pray ſuppoſe your ſelf in ſuch a ſtrait, *that you muſt either loſe houſes and poſſeſſions, wife, and children, and honour, or the favour and love of God, by committing thoſe your former ſins again*: and then conſider *which of theſe two you would chooſe*: and if you

you reſolve (by the grace of God aſſiſting you) to *loſe all the profits, pleaſures, and comforts of this world, rather then the favour and love of God* by a relaps into ſin, *your love* and *hatred* being thus *ſincere* and *upright*, you muſt then in juſtice acquit your *repentance and ſorrow* from that aſperſion of *hypocriſie* and *unſincerity*, and cenſure *him* for a *ſlanderer* who caſt in that *allegation* againſt it.

And now for that other *allegation* againſt your *faith* and *love*, becauſe of the abſence of *joy*, I deſire you to conſider, that

There is a *joy* which is the *fruit* of the *Spirit*, and it conſtantly ariſeth from *faith* in God, and *love* of him; and there is the *fulneſs* or *ſuperabundance* of that *joy*: the firſt is a ſmall *ray* onely; the ſecond as a *beam* from the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*; and both theſe are *gifts* of the bleſſed Spirit, and yet very different; the *firſt* as a *Grace*, the *ſecond* as a *Reward*; that *ray* of *joy* is a *grace* of God, and by the *light* of it, we may keep our feet from ſtumbling and falling; this *beam* of *joy*, is a *reward* from God, and by the exceeding *luſtre* of it, we are encouraged and cheared in our walking with God: and hence it appears that the *firſt* is a moſt neceſſary *fruit* of our *Faith* and

Love, and doth alwayes accompany them. We *love* him not unleſs we *rejoyce* in him, and of this *joy* is the Apoſtles precept, *Rejoyce in the Lord alway, and again I ſay, rejoyce*: whereas this *ſecond* is a bountifull expreſſion of Gods *extraordinary goodneſs* towards us, not an *ordinary grace* in us; a fore-taſte (indeed) of the *joyes* of heaven: The *firſt* is as the Chriſtian ſouls *daily bread*; this *ſecond*, as their *feſtival chear*.

Now Sir, if you have that *daily bread*, you are of Gods houſhold and family, though you ſeldom taſte of his *feſtival chear*: and I hope you want onely thoſe *dainties* which once you were fed with, and that this *Bread*, which is common to all the family, is your *ſouls daily Food*; that you have ſtill in you a *ray* of *joy*, though not a *beam*: and if ſo, this *joy* is a good evidence of your ſincerity in *Faith* and *Love*; and therefore you may cenſure *him* alſo for a *ſlanderer*, who caſt into the court of your conſcience, this *allegation* againſt your *Faith* in God, and *Love* of him.

Thus Sir, I comfort my ſelf with *hope*, that you neither flattered your ſelf heretofore (in accounting your ſelf *reconciled* to God through Chriſt) nor that there is ſuch a *totall privation* of *Grace* in you, as you complain of. And

And for that *partial privation* of *Grace*, the abatement of your *fervor* in *prayer*; in answer to that I shall premise, First, that there is a *gift* of *Prayer*, and a *spirit* of *Prayer* or *Supplications*; and many have the *gift* of Prayer, (to express their own, or other mens desires to God in Prayer readily, and in fit words) who have not the *spirit* of *Prayer* and *Supplications* (that is, *Fervor* and *Zeal*, and *Ardency of Spirit*) and on the contrary, many have this *grace* of *fervor*, who have not that *gift* of *Prayer*, and of this *sanctifying Grace* (*fervor* and *zeal*) it is (as I conceive) the Prophet *Zachary* speakes, not of this *gift* of *Prayer*, which is onely an *edifying grace*.

Secondly, that exact *intention* and perfect *fervor* with all our *heart*, and all our *mind* in the whole *worship* of *God*, is a *Treasure* not ordinary in these *earthen Vessels*; while we carry about this *body* of *flesh*, the *spirit* and *imagination* of man will be wandring oft-times, and we cannot be wholly *intent* in the *Service* of *God*.

Now Sir, your complaint is not (I perceive) for want of the *gift* of Prayer, (*expressions in supplications*) but for the decay of the *fervor* and *zeal* you formerly had: but whether you charge your self

with that *infirmity* of our *mortal ſtate* and condition only, that you are not *wholly intent* and *attent* at your *Prayers*; or whether you complain as guilty of ſome *notorious wandrings* of thoughts at your performance of *holy Duties*, which are truly *perſonall faults*, I underſtand not, and therefore I anſwer ſomewhat to both.

Exact and *full intention*, with all our *Soul*, in the *Worſhip of God*, we muſt *aime at*, and *ſtrive for*, and *lament* our defects in it; Our vain *imaginations*, our worldly *thoughts*, and what ever divert us from the *attention* to that *holy buſineſs*, we have in hand, though we *conſent* not to them, not *ſtay* upon them with any *delight*, but *reject* them as faſt as they ariſe in our *mindes*; yet theſe, and every one of theſe we muſt *lament* and bewail, and be *diſpleaſed* with our ſelves for thoſe our *failings*; *lament* theſe, I pray, as the *natural infirmities* of your *condition* in the *fleſh*, though (as I conceive with ſubmiſſion to better judgements) *not as your perſonal faults* and *ſins*: theſe argue not any decay of the *grace* and *fervor*, onely an *imperfection* in it, as there is of all *graces* in the beſt Saints of God on earth.

But then, ſecondly, if your complaint be of ſome *notorious wandrings*, ſome *ſtay*

upon

upon vain *imaginations*, and ſome *delight* in them, which take your *ſoul* off from its *intention in Prayer*; theſe are *ſins* and *perſonal faults* in you.

And even theſe *ſins* are too common with many of the *Children* of *God*, and therefore it is not improbable you may complain of *them*.

And this *indevotion* and want of recollecting our thoughts home, while we are at *holy Duties*, is ſometime a *cauſe* of our *drought* and *barrenneſſe*; we uſe not well that *talent* of *fervor* and *zeal* which God gives us, we ſtir it not up, and thereupon we grow *barren* and *dry*: and another while, this is the *effect of our barrenneſs*, we want our former *comforts* and *delights* in *holy duties*, and thereupon we cannot be ſo *intent* at them as formerly. Theſe our *comforts* are (as you allude) like *Aaron* and *Hur* to *Moſes*, very uſefull to hold up our *weary hands in prayer*: *fervor*, and *intention* doe ordinarily decreaſe for want of *comforts* and *delight* to ſupport and ſtrengthen it.

Now if this decay of *zeal* and *fervor* be in you, as the *cauſe* of your *barrenneſs*, I need not ſay how ſevere you ſhould be in *judging* your ſelf for bringing all theſe in-

con-

conveniences upon your own *ſoul*, by your own *ſins*; and if as *the effect of this your barrenneſs*, yet repent you muſt of your *neglect* of *this grace* of God, that you ſhould ſtir up this your *fervor* no longer, then it was for your own turn (your *comfort and delight*) when that could not be ſerved by it, that you *neglect* it, and ſuffered it to decay in you. And then after this, you muſt endeavour to *ſtrengthen your feeble knees, and to hold up your heavy hands*, that your *ſoul* may recover daily, and encreaſe again to its wonted *fervor*, and then goe on beyond your former meaſure, adding *fervor* unto *fervor*, and *ſtrength* unto *ſtrength*. It is for *Gods* cauſe and for the *Love* of him you are *fervent* in this your *barrenneſs*, and therefore let it far exceed that *fervor* you were wont to have for *your own ſake*, becauſe of *your own comforts* with it.

But now, as I muſt not ſooth you up in the leaſt degree of *ſin*, or want of due *fervor*, and therefore I have ſaid this; ſo on the other ſide, I muſt not ſuffer you to be dejected and caſt down without a juſt cauſe, and therefore I ſhall ſay more, and tell you, *I hope better things of you*.

The *quick ſenſe* you have of your *want* of *fervor*, and the *preſent grief* which you expreſs

expreſs redounding from it, is a probable Argument to me, that your *fervor* is as much at preſent as formerly it was, though it be not ſo *ſenſible* to you; and neither that *grace* of *fervor*, nor any *other* in you, can be ſo *evidently perceived* by you, while you labour under that *totall privation of comfort* (whereof you complain) as at other times they may.

And if ſo, that which you complain now of, is only this, that the wonted *comfort* of your *fervor* and *zeal* (which formerly you had in *Gods ſervice*) is now withdrawn from you, ſo that you can neither *feel* your *comfort*, nor your *fervor*; not that your *fervor* is abated, but that the *comforts* in which it did reflect to your eye, are taken away from you; it is not now to be diſcerned by *them*. And then it will appear it is Gods *mercy* you want in *Comforting*; not his *Grace* in *aſſiſting you* in *his Worſhip*; and ſo it is the ſame diſeaſe you complained of before, though now it comes towards the height and violence of it. Or ſecondly, is not this very *fervor* and *zeal* of yours working elſwhere? though it appeares not in your *Cloſet*, to you *Praying*, yet it may work in your *Parlour*, at your *Table*, and in your *Viſits* abroad.

Doe-

Doe you not perceive it *mortifying* and *subduing* those *corrupt affections* and *desires* which were wont to presse upon you, at your *Meales*, and in your *Discourses*?

If so, this is the *fervor* and *zeal* of *Prayer* about another work, in another room. We usually brand *Those* deeper who neglect their *houres* of *Devotion*, then *Those* who restrain not the *exorbitancies* of their *Affections*: And on the contrary we usually set a better Character upon *Those* who are punctuall at their *houres* of *Devotion*, and constantly *fervent* in *Them*, then upon *Those*, who obtain frequent *victories* over their *Corruptions*.

A *fervent Suppliant* is of more esteem (ordinarily) then a *Valiant Champion*; and the reason hereof, is, because every *fervent Suppliant* is presumed to be a *Valiant Champion* also: Let me then (I pray) have my liberty to presume that every *Valiant Champion* who overcomes his *Lusts*, is a *fervent Suppliant*.

And therefore Sir, if with S. *Paul*, you mortifie and die daily, 1 *Cor.* 15. 31. with him you pray also continually, 1 *Thes.* 5. 17. and with him you are instant also in Prayer, *Rom.* 13. 12. *Consider, I pray, what I say, and the Lord give you understanding*

to

to discern aright what your wants are, and how they may be supplied: to that purpose I shall pray for you, as becometh

Your servant in Christ.

The eighth Letter.

The soul farther complaineth of a total privation of grace, somewhat too evident in her, because she wants all spiritual joy.

Sir,

THe want of those *dainties* (as you term them) cannot but trouble me, that once I should have *fulness of joy*, but now unworthy of it, be thrust down, as I deserve, to a *lower mess*; but now and then I fear, that even the *daily bread* (you speak of) is denied unto me, yea, the *crums which fall from my Lords Table*, so little *joy* and *delight* I find in *holy Duties*: and further, if sometimes I have in stead of *bread* a *stone*, hard and dry, without any softness and moisture, surely then I want not onely those *dainties* and *delicacies* for my *pleasure* and *comfort*, but even this *bread* for my *nourishment*; and this hard fare hath made me so moderate in my desires, that though I have not such an *allowance of joy*, as is *expedient* to *commend* my *love*, yet if I could constantly perceive that *portion of joy*, in

me,

me, which is *neceſſary* to *evidence* that a *love* there is in me, I ſhould reſt ſatisfied with it, and poſſeſs my ſoul in peace and quietneſs: for what greater *comfort* need I deſire then this, that my *joy* and *love* is ſuch as is acceptable in Gods ſight; and that notwithſtanding my manifold imperfections I am in the favor of God through Chriſt? If I be of Gods *family*, though but a *dore-keeper*; if I be at his *table*, though of the *loweſt meſs*, this would be a great *comfort*, and a full ſatisfaction to me.

But alas, Sir, in ſtead of my former *Omer* of *joy*, I doe not now finde this *Epha*! And if my *joy* wholly fails, what *love* can there be in me? and now of late I have been ſearching up and down my ſoul for thoſe other *graces* and *virtues* which *Gods Spirit had formed* in me; and whereas they ſhould *grow* and *increaſe* more and more, for a while they alſo have *languiſhed* in me, and now (I fear) they are quite *dead*: my *comforts* were no ſooner taken away from me, but theſe *graces* I perceived *maimed* and ſorely *lamed* in me, when I was once *ſtripp'd* of *them*, I preſently felt my ſelf *wounded* in *theſe vitals of grace* and *vertue*; but now I am *quite* ſtripp'd (I fear) of *theſe* two, *ſpoliatus conſolatione*,

&

& ſpoliatus gratiâ alſo. Not onely wounded in *Grace*, but *ſtripped* as bare of it, as of *Comfort*.

Thus I ſeem to void thoſe good hopes you ſtill nouriſh in you, concerning my being in the ſtate of *Grace*; But eſpecially thoſe you laſt mention of my *fervor* and *zeal*. I am a *weak Suppliant* (God help) and a *weaker Combatant*.

Indeed if I ſhould perceive my *Zeal* working, onely while I am on my *Knees*, and not otherwayes alſo; in my *Cloſet*, and not *elſewhere*, I dared not approve my ſelf for *that*; I was wont to aime at being a *ſtout Combatant*, as well as a *fervent Suppliant*: But now, not onely my *Knees* are *feeble*, but alſo my *Hands*, and no *Zeal* at all to be perceived, either in raiſing up my *Affections* at *Prayer*, or at other times in beating down my *Luſts* and *Corruptions*.

And when I plead for my *Excuſe*, (as you ſuggeſt I may) my *Natural Infirmity*, I fear leſt that ſhould be *Self-flattery*. I am too prone to *flatter* my ſelf in my *Original weakneſs* and *corruption*; ſo that otherwhile I impute even my *Licentiouſneſs* to my *Natural Infirmity*: I am actually *ſloathful*, and will not, and then I excuſe

it,

it, that I am naturally *weak* and *cannot*.

If I could ſtrive againſt theſe *natural Corruptions*, and *lament them* (a caution you warily annex to that excuſe) then, and not elſe, will they excuſe me. But as I now am, I am, (as I ſaid) without *comfort*, without *Grace* (I fear) eſpecially without that of *Fervor* and *Zeal*, and without *Excuſe* too.

My *ſins*, my *ſins*, have excluded all the *comforts* of *God*, and all the *graces* of *God* alſo, from my *ſoul*; I am leſs then the leaſt of them all: I call to mind the dayes that are paſt, when my ſoul enjoyed a ſweet *communion* with God, when there were continual *entercourſes* ful of unſpeakable *comfort* between *my Lord* and *my ſoul*, when he was pleaſed frequently to lead me into his *banqueting houſe*, and there *chear* me with *flagons* and *apples*; when my *ſoul* was *elevated and ſtaid up* with his *conſolations and graces*; and when I recall this, my *ſoul* ſinks into the vally of *ſorrow*. For now *my God* paſſes by me as a *wayfaring man*, and is become *a ſtranger* unto me, *viſits* me not, either with *comforts* or *grace*.

And when I hear my God aggravating *Solomons ſin, becauſe he had ſhewed himſelf unto him twice*, 1 *King*. 11. 9. I tremble and

and fear leſt that ſhould be a *charge* againſt me alſo, that, after *God* had *appeared* unto me, with moſt kind *viſits of comforts*, and with a moſt *ſweet fellowſhip of graces*, *ſo long together*, *day by day*, I ſhould provoke him by my tranſgreſſions to with-hold *theſe good things* from me.

But Lord, though my ſoul faint for theſe thy mercies, yet will I hope in thy word; though mine eyes fail with looking after thee, ſaying, when wilt thou comfort me? though I am become like a bottle in the ſmoak (parched and dry, filthy and unfit for any ſervice in thy Tabernacle) *yet will I not forget thy power nor thy mercy*, Pſalm. 119. v. 82. &c. Thou who *gaveſt* theſe firſt, canſt, and wilt *reſtore them* to me again; if I be beyond *cure* and cannot be *healed* (becauſe I am *dead*, and my *vitals of grace periſhed*) yet I may be *revived*: *Enliven and quicken me* (*O Lord I beſeech thee*) *after thy loving kindneſs, and ſo ſhall I keep thy teſtimonies*: Joyn with me, I pray Sir, in theſe my Prayers, for I am

Your friend and

ſervant in Chriſt.

The

The Answer.

Graces may be in the soul, and not perceived by the soul; some have spiritual joy, and feel it not, because they will not; others cannot.

Sir,

I Am heartily sorry that your *fears* and *jealousies* concerning the main of all, your *regeneration and acceptation* into the *favour of God, encrease* rather then *decrease* in you; I cannot answer *positively* to any of these *fears* which arise in you; *God* onely who knowes your *heart* is able *fully* and *undoubtedly* to certifie you, whether you be one of his *servants* and *family* or no; and whether your soul be *wounded* onely, or *quite stripp'd* also of his *graces*.

Yet this I can answer in general, First, that though the *spirit* of *man can* of it self *discern* its own *dispositions and qualifications* what it hath, and what it hath not, yet whether they be *natural inclinations*, or *spiritual graces*, it cannot *naturally discern*; the *holy Spirit* of *God* must *witness* with *our spirit, concerning the things which are given us of God*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 12. so that to know the *graces* of God, which are in us, is *from God*.

Secondly, *from God*, as a *gift*, not as a

grace

grace: and therefore I believe ſome *ſervants of God* have many *graces* in them, when they have not this *gift* of God to *know* they have *them*: the Apoſtle indeed ſayes, *He who lacketh theſe graces is blind*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 9. But he ſayes not, he who is blind, and cannot ſee them, lacketh them; our *faith*, and all our other *graces*, may lie *buried* and overwhelmed with the *diſtruſtful ſuggeſtions* of the *fleſh*, ſo that we cannot ſee them: theſe *graces* may have *private operations* in us, *ſecret* to us, yet *manifeſt* to *God*; the *ſpirit* within us may *groan*, and *God hear* it, when *we doe not*.

And thirdly, I hope it is *thus* with you at this time, that your former *graces* and *virtues* are in you, though you want this *gift* to *diſcern them*: do you not give way too much to theſe *fears* and *jealouſies* of your *fleſh*, ſo that *God* ſuffers your *graces* to be *overwhelmed* with *them*?

And now in particular, concerning your *joy* and *love* of God; I anſwer, that this *Ephah of joy* (as you tearm it) which is the *conſtant fruit of love*, though it be *little* in reſpect of the *Omer*, yet in it ſelf, it is *great* and very conſiderable; who can meditate upon his own *intereſt* which hee hath with *God*, that he is *his God*, and *his Savior*,

Saviour, and not have great *joy* in himself? though there be no *ſenſible Conſolations* at all to accompany this *joy*, yet there are many *dear ſervants of God*, who live by *it*, and are all their lives long *ſupported* with *this joy alone*, and a very good *evidence* they account *it*, of their *love* of God, and their *faith* in him.

And ſome there are, who have this *joy* in them, but *feel it not*; and thereupon they complain for want of its *evidence*, to their *love* and *faith*; and theſe are of two ſorts, ſuch as *will* not *feel* it, and ſuch as *cannot feel it*. Some there are who are ſo carried away with *melancholy*, or with *temptations* from their *ghoſtly enemies*; that they make it a main part of their buſineſs to raiſe *doubts and fears* in themſelves; ſpend their time and wit in framing *objections*, and in ſtarting *jealouſies* againſt themſelves, and thus *help forward their own affliction*, & in the mean time what ever argumēts of *comfort* they hear, or read, or *feel* in themſelvs, *theſe* they let *paſs unregarded*; they are very *quick* at *objections*, yet very *ſlow*, and dul at the *ſolutions* of them; whereas a far leſs degree of reaſon, and wiſdome, would anſwer all their *objections*, and reſolve all their *doubts*, if they would bend their ſtudy, or

their

their thoughts that way. These I reckon among them, who have the *joy* of the *spirit* in *them*, but *feel* it not, because they *will not*. They look onely upon the *dark side of the cloud* (which is for the Ægyptians) whereas the *light side it is*, which is to be, a *guide* to the *Israelites*; they are all for *fears and doubts*, not at all for *comforts* to themselves. And though I will not, yet I pray ask your self the question, whether you be not of this *fourm*.

If not, yet others there are, who have this *joy* of the *Spirit*, and *cannot feel it*; *it* is in them, and so are *other graces* too, though they *cannot discern it* nor *them*. They have this *Ephah of heavenly Manna*, yet because they think of the *Omer*, which others happily have, and they themselves have formerly had, they want it, while they have it; it is their *bread* and the *staff* of their *spiritual life*; yet because it is more *dry*, and *less savoury*, then heretofore it was, they account they receive *no nourishment* from *it*: and there are many of this *fourm in Christs school*; and though *fears* and *doubts* be high in you, yet I hope you are not excluded; your *graces* are still in you, and as *vigorous* as ever; *no desertion* at all of *grace* in you. For it is ordinary, that the other

desertion

deſertion of *comfort* (when it is towards its hight) raiſes up all theſe *fears* and *doubts* in us, and our *ghoſtly enemies* take us at this *diſadvantage*, and labour, what they can, to *foment our fears* in us.

The School-men are wont to ſay, that all the while our *moſt bleſſed Savior Chriſt* lived upon earth, there was (as it were) a *traverſe drawn* between the *beatifical viſion*, and the *ſenſitive faculties of Chriſts humane ſoul*: and that when our *Savior* was upon the *Croſs, and cried out, My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? then the traverſe was drawn between the beatificall viſion, and the reaſonable faculties of his humane ſoul.*

This may be applied to many good *Chriſtians*, and to you alſo, I hope. While you abounded with heavenly *comforts*, (as you firſt mentioned) you were (as it were) with *Chriſt* in *heaven*, *ful every where*, and *repleniſhed all over* with *joy* and *comfort*. Afterward in your *firſt drineſs*, the beginning of your firſt *deſertion*, you were (as it were) with *Chriſt on earth*; all the time of that *deſertion of ſenſible comfort*, there ſeemed to be a *traverſe* drawn between that ſuperabundant *joy*, and the *ſenſitive faculties* of your ſoul; and now in *this deſertion* of *ſpiritual*

ritual comfort, in this depth of *barrenneſs*, you ſeem to be with *Chriſt* upon the *Croſs*; and the *traverſe* drawn between *thoſe joys* and the *rational faculties* of your ſoul: Heretofore in your *deſertion of ſenſible conſolation*, the lower part of your ſoul (her *ſenſitive faculties*) cried out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* but now even the upper part of your ſoul, *your rational faculties* alſo *want* the ſight of *thoſe joys*, and they cry out, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken us?* now your *reaſonable* ſoul, *fears* it is alſo *forſaken*, though (I verily hope it is only a *traverſe* drawn between your *ſoul* and thoſe *joys*; it began at firſt with a *cloud darkning*, now it is a *groſs ſhadow eclipſing* the *comfortable light of the Sun of righteouſneſs*, and of thoſe *graces* which were heretofore *ſhining* in you: And if ſo, as there was a *true hypoſtatical union* between *God* and *man*, *in Chriſt*, while he *cried* out *ſo*, on the *Croſs*, though the *manhood* had *no viſion* of the *Godhead*; ſo there is ſtill a *myſtical union* between *God* and your *ſoul*, though you have *no viſion* nor appearance of it: *ſubſtracta eſt viſio, non ſoluta eſt unio*; *Love* ſtil *unites you* to *God*, and there is *joy*, and other *neceſſary graces* with it too, though you wanted the

comfort of *them* in your *ſenſitive facultie*s *for a long time*, and *now* alſo, in your *reaſonable*.

But an *Argument* you have againſt all my *hopes*, and that is, that none of theſe *graces* doe *encreaſe* and *grow* in you, and therefore they muſt *wither* and *decay*.

Conſider I pray, there are *other graces* to grow in you, beſide *peace* and *joy*; and though the *light* of *Gods countenance*, thoſe *ſunſhine dayes* might *ripen them* moſt, yet this preſent *cloudy weather* may advantage your *growth* in *humility* and *mourning*, and *ſelf-denial*; and if there be a *growth downward* in *theſe*, though you perceive *no growth upward* in the *other*, yet you are *increaſing* in *holineſs*.

And I muſt not conceal it from you (in this caſe you are now) that from hence are my *hopes*, concerning you, much *cheriſhed*; I perceive you *feel* your *want* of *grace*, and you *complain* and *mourn* for it (which the *dead* cannot doe) and you *confeſs* your *ſins* with great *humility*, *loathing your ſelf* for them, and you *truſt* in *God firmly*, that he can and will reſtore you (and theſe proceed not, but from *life*, and *vigor too*) to your wonted *comforts* and *graces*, and upon theſe grounds I will ſtill *hope* well of you.

Neither

Neither can I peremptorily aſſert that *God with-holds* this *joy and comfort* from you, *as a Judge puniſhing* you hereby for ſome ſin or neglect; for *ſometimes* he is pleaſed to *with-hold them* as *a Lord of the Family*; hee uſually orders it thus for our *benefit*, for our *trial*, for the *exerciſe of our patience*, and waiting upon him, or for the *growth* of our *humility*, or for ſome other *ſpiritual* advantage to us; and *otherwhile* alſo God orders it ſo, for his *own wils ſake*, becauſe he is *Lord*, and we his *People*; not *judicially*, nor *œconomically*, but *arbitrarily*; not for *puniſhment*, nor *benefit directly* to us, but for ſome *deſigne* he hath upon *us*, *for his own wils ſake*; as he dealt with the *blind man* in the *Goſpell*, who was *born blind*, not for the puniſhment of any ſin, nor for the exerciſe of any vertue *primarily*, but for the *glory of God*.

Now Sir, my prayer for you is, that as the *Apoſtles*, ſo you alſo, with your *fear* may have *great joy*, S. *Matt.* 28. 8. and then as the *Macedonians*, that in *the abundance of afflictions* you may have *abundance of joy*, 2 *Cor.* 8. 8. Sir, I am

Your ſervant in Chriſt.

The ninth Letter.

The ſoul now is perplexed with the affrightments of Conſcience, and with the terrors of Gods moſt heavy diſpleaſure.

Sir,

MY diſeaſe encreaſeth yet more and more, and how ere I eſcaped hitherto, yet now it threatneth *utter ruin*. I have long wanted the *light of Gods countenance*, but now I eſpy him *frowning* againſt me; the *frowns of a Father, ſuch a Father*, (who hath been ſo mercifull unto me, and ſo tender of me formerly) who can bear? That from a *friend* he ſhould become a *ſtranger*; and *paſs* me by in ſtead of *viſiting* me! this was *grievous* unto me; but now that he ſhould come *againſt* me, as an *enemy!* *Job* 19. 18. that *he* who ſpake *peace* formerly unto my ſoul, ſhould for a while be *ſilent!* was *burthenſome* to me; but now that he ſhould *ſpeak bitter things againſt me! this is a lamentation, and muſt ever be for a lamentation.*

The ſame *hand* which was wont to *lead* me in the regions of *light*, and diſtribute to me *abundance* of the *comforts* and *joys* of *heaven*, doth now thruſt me down into the *pit* of *darkneſs* and *ſhadow* of *death*, where I ſee the *terrors* of *deſtruction*, and where I feel the *gnawings* of *hel*.

My

My Lord, who came firſt as an *Almoner* unto me, *ſupplying* my *neceſſities* with *Portions* of *Comfort* and *Grace*; and ſoon after, as a *Treaſurer*, *enriching* me with *Talents* of thoſe *Comforts* and *Graces*, *he* comes now as an *Avenger*, and a *Judge*, to receive the forfeiture of his laſt bleſſings, and to inflict the ſentence of condemnation upon me.

My *ſins*, which were *removed* from me as far as the *Eaſt* is from the *Weſt*, are now *met together again, and ſet in order* before me; and they which were as *white* as *ſnow* or *wool*, are now *crimſon* and *ſcarlet* again. Yea, my *Saviour* and *Redeemer*, who was my *ſurety*, and *cancelled* the *bond* of *hand-writing* which was againſt me, is now become an *incenſed Creditor againſt me. Lord*, if I could *beleive* in *him*, *he* would *quit* me, and ſet me *free again*; *Oh help thou mine unbeleif!* and though I am *weak* in *faith*, make me *faithful* in *weakneſs*.

And yet my *hope periſheth* alſo, *Lam.* 3. 18. I was wont, when I could not *rejoyce* in things *enjoyed*, yet ſomewhat to *comfort* my ſelf in *things promiſed*, but now *things paſt*, and *preſent*, and *to come*, are all againſt me, and *fear* is on *every ſide*: *Lord* be thou *ſtil my hope* and *my fortreſs!*

Sir, I delight not to expatiate in declaring this my moſt ſad condition; I beſeech you to pray for me, for I am a moſt diſtreſſed ſervant of *Chriſt*, and

Yours in him.

The Anſwer.

Comforteth the ſoul in her moſt ſad condition, and then it is alleged that all theſe troubles may be from the Devill.

Sir,

THis (if I be not deceived) is the *Paroxyſm* and violent height of your former *diſeaſe*; and by your relation it appears that *Job* and *David*, and the *Church* of *God* in the *Lamentations* (whoſe words you uſe) were in your very condition, and I need not tell you how *dear they were* unto God.

And if it be *God* that is againſt you, I ſtill hope that it is for the *trial* of you, or for the *exerciſe* of you, or for ſome of thoſe other ends I have named before; and aſſure your ſelf, if it be his *hand* that is thus *heavy* upon you, it may *bruiſe*, but it cannot *break* you.

And yet, I rather think, that the *Lord inflicts* not, only *ſuffers* this againſt you; that it is the *Devill*, who thus *buffets* you; and

and that theſe are his fierce *aſſaults* and *vehement temptations.* And if ſo, as *before* you were *conformable* to our *bleſſed Savior* in *deſertion of comfort,* ſo now you *fill up* that *conformity to him*, by enduring alſo this *infliction* of *temptations*: was not *hee tempted,* to *beleeve himſelf not the Son of God* by *generation*; as you are, *to beleive your ſelf, not his ſon, by adoption?* and were not *terrors round about him,* when he was in that *agony,* and when he *cryed* out, *If it be poſſible*, let *this cup paſſe from me*; as *terrors* now compaſſe you about?

And if our *head,* and *our fellow members* have *ſuffered theſe very afflictions*, I pray *think it not ſtrange concerning this fiery trial:* eſpecially conſidering that *this conformity to Chriſts ſufferings,* will *work out* for you, *a conformity to him, in glory.*

This in generall: in particular concerning the horrid *repreſentation* of your *ſins before you,* as unpardoned: provide (I preſume) you doe, that your *repentance* is *ſincere* and *unfeigned,* and therefore the *pardon* of your *ſins* is *irreverſible.* The *ſprinkling* of the *blood of Chriſt,* hath *fully diſcharged* every *penitent* ſoul from the *guilt of ſin*; and this *gift* of the *pardon* of our *ſins* is a *gift of God without repentance.*

But this *ful diſcharge* is not *fully apprehended* by us, our *Conſciences* cannot ſo *perfectly apprehend* the *pardon* of our *ſinnes*, as *Chriſt does perform it*; as the other *faculties* of our ſouls, ſo our *Conſciences* are *ſanctified* in *part only*, not *wholly*; and therefore it is, that when *Gods ſpirit ceaſeth* to *witneſs* with our *conſciences* (as in this height of *ſpiritual deſertion* it doth) then we fall preſently into *fears* and *doubts*, and *ſelf-condemnings*: you want therefore only the *atteſtation* of the *Spirit of God*, with your *conſcience* to *embolden* and *encourage* you, *firmly* to *beleive* the *forgiveneſs* of your *ſins*: and if *that* once come, your *deſertion* is gone, and your *diſeaſe cured*.

Now, Sir, if your *ſins* through *Chriſt*, be *fully pardoned*, though this *pardon* be not *fully apprehended* by you, (which our *imperfect mortal ſtate* will *ſcarce* admit) nay, though it be *not at all apprehended* by you, (which is the ordinary condition of the ſervants of God, when they are in *Deſertion*) though you *walk in this darknes, & have no light, yet put your truſt in the Name of the Lord, and ſtay upon your God. Iſa.* 50. 10.

But even in this, your Faith (you ſay) fails you; now therefore *call to remembrance the days of old*; thoſe many *mercies*, and

and *favors*, which *God hath beſtowed upon you*; and by the *experiences* of his fore-paſt *goodneſs* towards you, *ſtrengthen your faith*, in his *preſent*, & *future mercies* towards you; Gods *mercies paſt*, are *warrants* for *future mercies*, & where they have been *great heretofore*, they are *obligations*, whereby *God binds* himſelf to us, to beſtow *greater hereafter*. You therefore, who have received *much* heretofore, to you *much more* ſhall be given *hereafter*: *Habẽti dabitur*. Oh let this *ſtrengthen* your *faith*, and your *hope* too! But *that hope* is alſo out of your ſight, and ſeems to be *periſhed* too, and yet our Apoſtle ſaith expreſly, *Hope that is ſeen, is not hope*, R. 8. 24.

And therefore though *terrors be round about you*, *Truſt* (I pray) in *Him*, who *knows* (by his own experience) what it is to be *deſerted* of all *comfort*, and to be *tempted*, and moſt violently *aſſaulted* by the *Devil*; *truſt* in *Him*, *who knows whereof you are made*; and when you are able to bear no more, *truſt* in *Him*, who (if not before) yet then, will certainly *help* you, and deliver you: And in the midſt of your *fears* and *terrors look up* unto *Him*, who hath promiſed to *look down upon you*, *who are poor, and of a contrite ſpirit, and who tremble at his Word*, *Iſa.* 66. 2. Hide

your ſelf under *his own wings, for a little moment, and the Indignation will be overpaſt:* In the mean while I ſhall pray with that Devout *Father*, *Oh modicum longum, pie Domine, longum eſt, & multum valde nimis!* Thou haſt promiſed, *Lord*, to *afflict but for a moment*; *Alas holy Lord, it hath been a long, very long moment, and too too long: It is enough, Lord, it is enough, let this Cup paſs*; This is the earneſt Prayer of Him, who is *Your ſervant in Chriſt.*

The tenth Letter.

The Soul refreſh'd again with the Return of her former Conſolations.

Sir,

I Return you many thanks, for your Letters of ghoſtly *Direction* and *Comfort*; and for your Prayers for me; and the more heartily, becauſe they prove ſo behooveſull and advantageous to me; The *floods* of *afflictions*, and the *waves* of *terrors, beat vehemently upon my ſoul*, but the *Lord, who ſitteth above the water-floods*, hath ſupported me: and I have now ſeen *the wonders of God in the Deep*: The *wonder* of *his wiſdome*, in the variety of his diſpenſations, of *Comfort* and *Joy*; and then of *Grief* and *terror*; to *ſeverall men ſeverally*: And the great *wonder* of his *Power* and *Goodneſs*,

in

in upholding my *faint Soul* againſt the *violence* of all theſe *afflictions*; and now alſo in *freeing* and *delivering me from them all.*

I tarried the Lords leaſure, and he hath now again *given me my hearts deſire*; *He hath brought my feet out of that horrible pit, out of the mire and clay, & ſet me upon an Hill* and *a rock*, and *there doth he order my goings.* I have *found* Him *whom I ſought*, the love of my *Soul*, and the *joy* of mine *Heart*, *my God*, and *my Lord.*

Now I *enjoy* his *Preſence*, I *feel* his *influence*; and the *light* of his *Countenance* alſo *ſhines* upon me; *O Lord I wil praiſe thee, for though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is ſoon turned away, and thou now comforteſt me.* Surely, Sir, my *ſufferings compared* with the *Age* of my *ſinfulneſs*, but eſpecially with the *eternity* of *comforts*, which I ſhall enjoy, were but for a *moment*, *a very ſhort, ſhort moment*, but the *twinkling of an Eye:* and now my *joyes* return: I now behold the *face of God, and feel his comforts* in the *ſervice and worſhip of him*; and therefore every *houre* ſeemes *five*, till the *houre* of *Prayer* comes; till by *contemplations* and *meditations* I bring *my God* to *my ſoul:* The *days* for the ſolemn *worſhip* and *ſervice* of

God,

God, I could wiſh every one of them a *Joſhua's day*; the longeſt is too ſhort for me; and my wonted *hours* of *Devotion* and *Meditation* are too narrow a confinement for them; And when I am filled with the *comforts* of *God*, my *heart dilates* it ſelf further, by looking upon the *joys* of *heaven*; for if there be ſuch *joy*, during the *ſeed-time* how infinite is the *joy of harveſt*?

Praiſed be the Lord who hath heard my complaint, and anſwered my prayers, and that with advantage: I asked my former *comforts*, and he fils me with them, far more then before; he hath bin more bountifull to me, then I dared preſume to ask. Now I perceive it was ſo far from being *prejudiciall* to me, that it was *moſt expedient* for me, *that Chriſt ſhould goe away from me*, with theſe his Conſolations; for now He hath *ſent the Holy Ghoſt the Comforter* down into my ſoul, with far greater *delights*, and with more Heavenly *joy*, then ever heretofore; And if *barrenneſs* be ſo *fruitfull*, and yeilds ſuch a plentifull *harveſt*, oh my ſoul be thou never hereafter (though thy *barrenneſs* ſhould return again) dejected, or troubled at it: Reſolve thou rather with *Habakkuk*; *caſ.* 3. 17. Though there *be no Oyle of joy*, nor *wine of comfort*, no *nor*

bloſſome

bloſſome on the Olive tree, or Vine, (no appearance, or hopes of any *Oile,* or *Wine,* for *refreſhment*) yet will I *love* the *Lord,* and *rejoyce* in my *God*; And then preſs forward (O my *ſoul*) towards that of *Job,* cap. 13. 15. *Etiamſi occideres,* though I be parched and withered with *drought,* and conſumed with *barrenneſs,* though thou killeſt me (O Lord) with it, yet will I *love* thee, and *truſt* in thee.

O, *Sir,* rejoyce with me, and bleſs God for me, the *God* of my *joy* and my *comfort* for ever; *To him be all glory, and honour, and thanks,* for this his infinite mercy to me.

I pray *Sir,* let not this my health, and tranquillity of mind, deprive me of your letters; I am now at good leaſure to receive what further *directions* you ſhall think fit for me, and thereby you ſhall ſtil engage

Your ſervant in Chriſt.

The

The Answer.

Sensible Consolations, which proceed sometime from the holy Spirit, may proceed also from our own temper, or from the evill spirit: and therefore here is a limitation annexed to the former Directions.

Sir,

I Doe truly sympathize with you, and rejoyce for the *return*, and *encrease* of your *joyes*; Now you *see*, how *good* and *gracious* the *Lord* is, to all that *call* upon *him*, and *wait* upon him patiently, according to his *promise* by the *Prophet*, Isa. 54.7. *With great mercies will I visit thee again, though for a smal moment, I have forsaken thee.*

Your afflictions were like *Job's*, in *body*, in *estate*, in your *friends*, and in the *barrenness* of your *spirit*, and in the *terrors* of your *soul*; and your *deliverance* is like *his* also, (in these spirituall things:) as he did, so you have already received *double* for all your *losses*; for a *cup* of *affliction*, *vessels* of *joy*; for *disconsolate dayes*, *moneths* of great *delight* and *comfort*.

Continue I pray, your *indifferency*, to *abundance* or *want*; Let not the height of your *joyes* puff you up, nor the depth of *desertion* cast you down; or any condition dishearten

diſhearten you in the *ſervice* of God; Learn to be as well content, to be *with Chriſt*, on *Mount Calvary*, ſorely ſuffering, as on *Mount Tabor*, *ful of joy and comfort*; And as heretofore *Chriſt* was your onely *hope* in your *barrenneſs* and *ſorrow*, ſo let him be your *Rock*, and your *Caſtle* ſtill; and *rejoyce* not ſo much, in your *Conſolations*, as in *him*, who is the only true *joy*, and *comfort* for ever.

And now *Sir*, ſeeing you invite the trouble of my Letters ſtill to you, I cannot more fitly begin, then with a *limitation*, to my former *directions*.

They were preſcribed to you, preſuming (not without good grounds) that you are in the ſtate of *Regeneration*, and fitted they were, onely for you, and for ſuch as you are, the *true ſervants* of *God*; and therefore no way ſerviceable to any others: And that this my *limitation* of them, may appear to be *neceſſary*, I ſhall inform you, that theſe *conſolations* (whereof I have hitherto writtten) are *ſometimes* a ſpeciall *gift* of *God*, which he beſtowes upon ſome men to *invite* them, and *allure* them by the *ſweetneſs* of *them* to *his ſervice*, and one, whoſe *heart* is ſtill *ſtoney*, *may have them and receive the word with joy*, Saint

Mat.

Mat. 13. 20. And at other times, God beſtowes theſe conſolations *after regeneration* to *ſtrengthen* the *regenerate* and *encourage* them in his *ſervice*; and becauſe they want it *moſt* in their *weak beginnings*, he *then* therefore *more ordinarily*, and more *plentifully* beſtowes them.

Secondly, theſe *conſolations ſometime* proceed from our own *temper*, and from our *natural conſtitution*: ſome *men*, and many *women*, have ſuch *ſoft conſtitutions* and *tender tempers*, that the affections of *joy* and *grief* are very ſoon raiſed in them, they may ſoon be diſſolved (as it were) into *ſighs* and *tears*; & they are ſoon *dilated* and *enlarged* with the *chearful expreſſions* of *love and joy*: whereas men of *other tempers* cannot ſo readily expreſs their *grief* or *joy*.

And although (as of all other *tempers*, ſo) of this *ſofter conſtitution*, ſome have theſe *conſolations* given them from God, (as above expreſſed) yet it is moſt evident that thouſands of men and women abound in *outward and ſenſible conſolations*, not as a ſpeciall *gift* of *God*, but as *naturally* proceeding from their *own conſtitution*.

And as the *natural* man may have them, ſo may the *carnal* man alſo; for *thirdly*, theſe *conſolations* are *ſometime* raiſed by the *Devil*;

Devill; and although the *Devill* may raiſe theſe *conſolations ſometimes* in the true *ſervants* of *God*; yet it is moſt *likely* and *ordinary*, that he ſhould raiſe them in the *wicked* and *profane*, (over whom the Prince of darkneſs hath moſt power.)

And theſe *conſolations*, though they ſpring from ſeveral *fountains*, from *heaven* (the *holy ſpirit*) from *earth*, (our own *temper*) from *Hell*, (the *evill ſpirit*) yet are they all full of the *ſame comforts* and *delights* to the *outward ſenſitive faculties* of the ſoul; but there is this difference in them, the *firſt*, are *holy*, and *good*: the *ſecond*, *neither good*, *nor bad*, in themſelves, (though eaſily improvable to good) but *indifferent*; and the *third*, (as their Author is) *evill* and *dangerous*.

And hence it follows that theſe *conſolations* are common to *four* ſorts of men; *thoſe* from *heaven*, to *ſome*, who are *called*, & *choſen*; and to *others* alſo, who are only *called*, *not choſen*: *thoſe* from our *natural conſtitution*, to meer *natural* men: and *thoſe* from *Hell*, to *carnal and ſenſual men*; and that *one ſort only*, of theſe *four*, are the *true ſervants* of God. And therefore, as there may be true *repentance* and *love* of God, and *joy* in that true ſervant of God, without *theſe*,

(as

(as I ſaid before) ſo now I ſay, theſe *conſolations* may be, and are in *three ſorts* of men, without true *repentance*, and without true *love* and *joy*.

And now, having *limited* my former *counſell* and *directions* to the *beſt* ſort onely of men, I ſhall take my leave; and praying conſtantly for you, (as you doe I hope for me) commend you to the *eſtabliſhing* and *perfecting grace of God*, and reſt

Your ſervant in our
Lord and Maſter Chriſt.

The eleventh Letter.

The ſoul aboundeth more and more with Conſolations; and is now at leiſure to enquire farther into the cauſes of ſenſible Conſolations.

Sir,

I Still abound with theſe *conſolations*, and I cannot miſtruſt *them* to come from any other *fountain*, then from *heaven*; my *ſenſitive faculties* have ſome ſhare in *outward conſolations*, but my *rational faculties* overflow with *them*: and therefore I bleſs *God*, the *Author* of *theſe*, and of all true *comforts*: and theſe ſtill *encreaſe* in me; the

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oyle of my former *joy*, was as that, in the *widows* little cruiſe; but now I have ſuch ſtore, that (with the other *widow*) I want *veſſels to hold it.*

Oft-times I cry out (with the *holy man* I read of) *ſufficit Domine, ſufficit; it is enough Lord, it is enough, I am full of joy*, brim-full, and can hold no more. And *ſometime* I ſay with that holy *Ephraim* (whom I read of) *Recede pauliſper Domine, quoniam vas hoc fragile eſt: Come not ſo near, O Lord, with theſe heavenly raviſhments, becauſe I want a veſſell fit for them; this of my fleſh is ſmal and weak, and if thou ſteppeſt not back awhile, it wil even now break aſunder:* I could not conceal this *loving kindneſs of the Lord*; Becauſe I muſt deſire your prayers, that according to that of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 51. 12. *God would ſtill eſtabliſh me with this his free*, munificent *Spirit*: but your laſt letter is it I muſt ſpeak unto: and I hope it will not be accounted *curioſity*, if I deſire to be inſtructed further, concerning thoſe *ſenſible Conſolations.*

I know by late experience, that a *true ſervant of God* may be without *theſe conſolations*, but that any ſhould have them who is not the *ſervant of God*, ſeems ſtrange unto me; that the *rational faculties* may have

have true *joy* in them, when there is none in the *ſenſitive faculties*, this I have been a late example of; they have been in the *inward*, and not in the *outward man*; but that the *outward man* ſhould have them, and not the *inward*; the *fleſh*, (whi h *is more backward* of the *two*, *to any thing that good is*) and not the *ſoul* and *heart* (as it muſt be, if carnall men have them) this is not clear to me.

And *again*, that men of *ſoft natural tempers* ſhould have theſe *ſenſible Conſolations oftner*, and in *greater meaſure*, then men of contrary *tempers*, this ſeems evident enough; (as ſoft wax receives a deeper impreſſion then hard, becauſe it is more fitly diſpoſed for it) but, that theſe *Conſolations* (which are concerning *God*, and in the performance of *holy duties*) ſhould proceed from the naturall temper of any man, that is not ſo evident.

And *thirdly*, that the *Devill*, who labours all he can to quaſh theſe *conſolations*; and deprive us of them, that *he ſhould beſtow them* upon any man, but eſpecially that he ſhould at any time *befriend* the *ſervants of God with them*, this ſeems very ſtrange to me. I preſume (you ſee) upon your wonted favour, and if your occaſions permit

permit you, to write concerning theſe particulars, it will be a further obligation upon me, who am

Your friend and ſervant
in Chriſt our Lord.

The Anſwer.

That ſenſible conſolations are one of the Devils ſpiritual temptations, whereby he deceiveth many Papiſts and Proteſtants.

Sir,

I Am moſt ready to ſatisfie you, in your three particulars: it is moſt true that *Corpus aggravat animam* (as the wiſe man ſpeaks) *the fleſh puls the ſoul back* from any thing that is good; and though *both* of *them* (in our corrupt ſtate) are *backward* to every good thing, (as to *grieve* for *ſin*, and to *rejoyce* in *holy duties* to God) yet the *fleſh* and the *body* is the more *backward* of the *two*; and how that ſhould partake of theſe *Conſolations*, and the *Soul* be without them; that the *ſenſitive faculties* ſhould at any time have them, and not the *reaſonable*, in this you deſire further ſatisfaction.

That

That of the *Apoſtle* may be applied to this very particular; *The ſpirit is edified*, and *the underſtanding remains unfruitful*, 1 *Cor.* 14. the *ſpirit*, that is, the *ſenſitive faculties* of the *ſpiritual ſoul*, (as Saint *Auguſtine* ſeemes to take it here) may be *edified*, though the *underſtanding*, the *rational faculty* be not. For the tone, or the elocution, or the action and geſture of him *who ſpeaketh, though in an unknown tongue*, may work upon *them*, not upon *this*; upon the ſenſitive parts, when it cannot work upon the underſtanding.

And you may conſider farther, that ordinarily, God works upon the *ſoul* by the help of the *body*; by the *eye*, or the *ear*, and ſo upon the *imagination*, and by *that*, upon the *rational faculties*; and thus the *ſoul* is ſtirred up to apprehend this, or that, and to *hate*, or *love* this, or that, and then to *grief*, or *joy* for this, or that; and therefore there may be ſome *motions* to *hatred*, and *love*, and to *joy*, and *grief*, and ſome *beginnings* of *them* alſo, in the *outward* parts and *faculties*, which aſcend not ſo high as the *rational faculties*; or aſcend not with that power, as to make an impreſſion in *the wil* and *underſtanding*: and ſo the *body* (which is the more *backward* of the *two* in affecti-

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on to good) is *before* the *ſoul* in order of time, *God* working *by* the *body upon* the *ſoul*.

And that this remote motion (which begins in the *outward ſenſitive faculties*) to *ſorrow* for *ſin*, and to *joy* in *Gods ſervice*, is from, and by the *grace* of *God*, ſtirring men and women of tender conſtitutions up thereunto, may be an anſwer to your *ſecond particular*. Every motion which tends either at a diſtance, *remotè*; or neer hand, *proximè*, to any thing that good is, is from God: he doth not onely *give* what good is, but *diſpoſe* us to it: of our ſelves, the beſt *Tempers* are unable, yea indiſpoſed, to doe Good.

That our *conſtitutions* are *tender* and *ſoft*, and that we are by them *eaſie to be wrought* upon, for the expreſſions of *joy* and *grief*; this is a *gift* of *God* not common to all: but that ſuch a melting *temper* is *actually* moved and *wrought* upon, to vent thoſe expreſſions of *grief* for ſin, and thoſe of *joy*, in the *ſervice of God*, and not on the *contrary* (as *naturally* all *tempers* doe) this is the *ſpecial grace of God*; this is a *motion* of the *bleſſed Spirit*, ſtirring up the *ſenſitive faculties*, to invite the *rational faculties*, to *mourn* for *ſin*, and to the *love* of *vertue*.

And

And now it will not ſeem ſtrange to you, (ſeeing *outward things* do moſt commonly ſtir up theſe *ſenſible Conſolations*) that the *body* ſhould be ſometime affected with them, and not the *Soul*; the *ſenſitive*, and not the *rational faculties*: For, firſt theſe *outward things* are *nearer* to the *ſenſitive faculties*, then to the *rational*: and ſecondly, they have a greater *aſſimilation* or *likeneſſe* to the *ſenſitive*, then to the *rational faculties*; and it is no marvell, that things which are like one to the other, and at a *little diſtance* one from the other, ſhould have an influence one upon another, when they have no influence at all upon things *unlike* them, at a *greater diſtance* from them; that, when *outward* and *ſenſitive* things work not upon the *ſpirituall* and *rational faculties*, (which are *far off* them) they may, notwithſtanding, work upon the *ſenſitive faculties* (which are *next adjoyning* to them.)

And now for your *third*, that theſe *ſenſible conſolations*, are *ſometime* raiſed by the *Devil*: that this *evill ſpirit can* work upon the *outward ſenſes*, and upon the *imagination*, in that manner, as to move *tears*, or *joy* in the *outward man*, will not be denied; and therefore that he *wil* move us in that

that manner, if he *can wrest* thoſe *conſolations* to his advantage, this will be granted alſo.

All that is queſtioned then, is, whether the *Devill can* gain any *advantage* to *himſelf* by our *ſenſible Conſolations.*

Indeed his common project is to deprive us of *them*, that he may tempt us, for the want of *theſe comforts*, to deſert the *ſervice of God* as a *ſour grape*, and as *unſavoury waters*; and at other times, for his own ends, he is as ready to give them to us. When the Devill cannot prevail againſt us, by *worldly temptations*, then he caſts *ſpiritual temptations* in our way; and for one of thoſe, he uſeth theſe *ſenſible conſolations.*

And this is moſt notorious in the *Popiſh Churches* abroad: The *Popiſh Prieſts* make it a chief part of their buſineſs, both at their *prayers* and Sermons to raiſe up in their people, theſe *outward conſolations*; which is not that, I blame in them, but the many *mimicall*, and *hiſtrionicall geſtures*, and *poſtures*; which they uſe for this purpoſe, which are ſo *abſurd*, and *childiſh*, that they are as likely to move *ſcorn*, in the *rationall faculties*, (when they are examined by reaſon and Scripture) as *conſolations*, in the *ſenſitive faculties.*

And yet as *foolish*, and as *vain* as their *gestures* are, they produce this effect of *sensible consolations*, most plentifully in many of the people; the *Devill* (I perswade my self) it is, who furthers these *Papists* with such *sensible consolations*, in a most plentifull manner, that by the *outward gust*, and *sweetness* of them, he may still hold them in love with their *Errors* and *Superstitions*.

When I see many of *them*, more *affected*, and *delighted*, at their *devotions before a Crucifix*, or *an Image of some Saint, or Angel*, then *before* the *most dreadful and merciful Lord* of all, *without these Images*; when I observe, that they have greater plenty of these *sensible consolations* at an *Ave Maria*, then at a *Pater noster*, and more, at a *Pater noster* (which language many of them understand not) then at *Our Father, &c.* in their mother tongue; that they more abound with them at their *prayers* to *Saints and Angels*, then at their *Prayers* to *God himself*; when I hear some of them say, while we were with you in the *Protestant Church*, though we employed our selves in *holy and religious duties*, with diligence and earnestnesse, yet we wanted those *comforts* and *delights* in them which

we

we now find; there are no *joyes* like thoſe *joyes* we now *taſte*, ſince we were *reconciled to the Church of Rome* and ſince we gave up our ſelves, to obſerve the *rites* and *ceremonies*, and *orders* of *that Church*; when I ſee and hear theſe things, may I then not fully conclude, that theſe *Conſolations* are not from *above*, but from *beneath*; not from *God*, but from the *evill ſpirit* the *deceiver* of theſe Papiſts?

And I wiſh heartily there were no ſuch *deluſions* in our *Proteſtant Churches*; and that theſe *deluſions* of the *Papiſts*, had not any influence upon any of *us*, of the *Reformation*.

Theſe *conſolations*, which many *Papiſts* find in their *devotions*, are the *motives* which prevaile with ſome of them (I doubt) to be ſo *frequent* at their *prayers*; *ſeven times a day*, ordinary with many of them, (ſo that we cannot deny (though we bluſh to ſay it) that many of the *Popiſh perſwaſion*, are more frequent at their *devotions*, then *we* of *our perſwaſion* ordinarily are) whereas were their *devotions leſſe effectuous*, and not ſo fraught with this *outward* and *ſenſible ſweetneſs*, it may be feared, that they would ſtay at a lower number: And yet this *frequency* at their *devo-*

tions, and their *affectuouſneſs* in *them*, are arguments which have prevailed with ſome weak (though well affected people) to forſake *us*, and to become *their Proſelytes*. And therefore if theſe *conſolations* plentifully ſcattered have been, and are ſtill, the occaſion (at leaſt) of confirming *Papiſts* in their *errors*, and of ſeducing *Proteſtants* from the *truth*, who will not grant, that the *Devill* is the *Grand Agent* in them?

And now for our *Proteſtant* Churches, I have known divers *men*, but eſpecially *women*, very much affected at *Sermons* and *Prayers*, and ſo much the more, if the *Curate* disfigure himſelf thereat, by *uncomely looks*, or uſeth *mimical geſtures*; if he *draw* out his *Prayers*, with a *whining tone*, and his *Sermons*, with a *thundering voice*: whereas a *grave Divine*, with a *ſober carriage*, and *meet elocution*, *moves* them *not* at all.

When I perceive one while *more weeping eyes*, and another while, *more chearfull countenances*, at the *ſinging* of the *Pſalmes*, *tranſlated into meeter*, then at the ſame *Pſalmes*, (ſung too) in other tranſlations, *in Proſe*; And when I hear ſome ſay, that they are more *edified* (that is, *affected with ſenſible conſolations*) at *extemporary Prayers* (eſpe-

(especially when they are *toned out*) then at *composed Prayers*, and *set-forms*, reverently pronounced; that at *those*, their groans and sighs beat as thick, as a *Pulse* in the *height of* a *Feaver*, and at the *divine Liturgie* of the *Church*, and other *godly forms* of *Prayer*, their *souls* are quite *barren*, and their hearts as hard and dry as flints, though in some of these I think those *consolations* may proceed from their own *natural temper*, or from *custome*, or *pre-engaged affections*, or so; yet I doubt, the *Tempter*, that *Deceiver*, hath somewhat to doe in most of *them*.

It is *he* (I fear) who is *active* to lull their affections *asleep* at our *Divine service*, lest it should be *truly profitable* and *advantageous* to them; and as *busie* (I fear) *he is*, in stirring them up, and *awakening* them, at *these indigested, extemporary Prayers*; and stirs up *false joyes*, and *griefs* with them.

And I am the rather induced to think that the *Devil* is an *Agent* herein, because I perceive that after a while, most of these *men* and *women* take up an ill conceit of our *Church service*, and then, of all *set Forms*; yea, even some of them mislike that *set form* of our *most blessed Saviours most absolute, and most perfect Prayer*. For

ſeeing their *outward comforts* are raiſed more at *extemporary Prayers*, and *Sermons*, then at *ſet Forms* and wel-ſtudied *Sermons*, hereupon they eſteem *thoſe* onely, and neglect, yea, contemn *theſe*; and now they begin to think, that there is no *devotion* in themſelves, or in others, unleſs they ſhew themſelves, to be as tedious in *babling*, and as *vain*, as the *Phariſees* were.

And I am further confirmed in it, when I obſerve, in ſome of our good *brethren*, and *ſiſters*, very evill *conſequences* from ſuch *conſolations*. For, firſt, they *cry up ſuch Preachers* (whether *Divines* or *not*) who raiſe theſe *conſolations*, in them, for the only *ſoul-ſaving Preachers in the country*, and then to theſe *Sermons*, *and Prayers*, they muſt travaile (though their husbands and maſters preſs them, to the duties of their calling, at home) and all *loſs* they account *gain*; the *pains* of travelling ſome miles *pleaſure*; if theſe *conſolations* be raiſed, or nouriſhed in them; and then farther, all other *Divines* they *contemn*, and *ſtrive with their Prieſts*, accounting them all, *un-edifying*, and *unprofitable* to themſelves, and others, *without heat*, and *without light*.

And while they have the perſons of their own *Miniſters* in *admiration*, eſteeming

ming them ſuch infallible guides, that they can neither *deceive*, nor be *deceived*, nor *miſlead*, nor be *miſled*, mark (I pray) what follows; (though I cannot write it, without a great deal of grief) In this *hony* of *ſenſible conſolations* there is wrapt up, too often, the *gall* of *error*, and *ſedition*, and *ſchiſm*; and many thouſands there are, who ſwallow them all together.

Theſe their *admired Preachers*, at *theſe edifying Sermons*, *ſecretly* inſtill into them moſt *dangerous opinions*; and after a while, theſe opinions bring on *wicked practiſes*: For, as they *embrace error*, *thinking* it *truth*, and *reject truth*, *thinking* it *error*; ſo alſo they *chuſe evill*, *thinking* it *good*, and *refuſe good*, *thinking* it *evill*; and from hence I fear it is that now, while they *reſiſt* the *higheſt powers*, and while they *perſecute* their fellow ſubjects, they are *perſwaded*, they do *God good ſervice*.

And all theſe, I ſum up as *evill conſequences* of that unhappy miſtake, of theirs, concerning theſe *ſenſible conſolations*; that thoſe *conſolations* (which they receive by the *Miniſtery* of *theſe men*, and by the uſing of thoſe means of *extemporary Prayer*, and the like) are the *gift of God*, and *evident ſignes* of their *edification*, by *them*:

whereas if *they* were the *gift* of *God*, and they truly *edified* by *them*, they would not onely abound in ſome *virtuous practiſes* (ſuch as they chuſe as moſt ſutable to their own diſpoſitions, as of *Prayer*, *zeal*, and *devotion*, and *attending to the ordinances of Gods Word*, *and Sacraments*, ſtrict keeping the Lords day, and of liberality towards *them* of their own *way*) but in all other *virtues* alſo; in a ready performance of the *whole will of God*, in ſubduing the luſts of *pride*, and *covetouſneſs*, and *anger*, and the like inordinate affections; in *charity* and *meekneſs*, in *humility* and *patience*; and in *obedience* alſo to their *natural*, *political*, and *eccleſiaſtical Parents*; and untill I ſee theſe *principal vertues* (as well as thoſe others) practiſed by them, I cannot think (though I beg pardon if I judge amiſs) that theſe their *conſolations* are from *heaven*, *heavenly*.

And although they have now great *delight* and *joy*, in ſome *exerciſe of holineſs*; yet their *errors* and *wicked practiſes* (if once diſcovered to them) will fill them full of *torment*, and *vexation of ſpirit*; their *uncharitableneſs*, *fierceneſs* and *rage*, their *diſobedience* and *diſloyalty* to their *Prince*, their *contempt* and *ſcorn* of the *Clergy*, eſpecially of

of the *reverend Fathers*, and *Governors of the Church*, their *ſacrilege*, in *ſtriping the Church* of her *Patrimony*, *Ornaments*, and *Liturgy*; their *ſchiſm*, their *oppreſſion*, and *perſecution*, the *grief* and *ſorrow* for theſe, and ſuch like ſins of theirs (when God ſhal pleaſe to open their eyes) will overthrow all this their *ſenſible joy and comfort*; then will they perceive that they were not *edified*, but *deluded*, and *ſeduced* by theſe *ſenſible conſolations*.

And now Sir, if you pleaſe to conſider what a plentifull *harveſt*, here, and abroad, the *Devill reaps* from this *ſeed* of *ſenſible conſolations*, you will not think ſtrange that ſome of *theſe* (not to ſay moſt) come *not* from *God*, who ſends *joy*, and *truth*, and *holineſs* together: Nor that *theſe conſolations* ſhould be a *ſnare* of the *Devils laying*; whereby many of (our dear Chriſtian brethren) *the Papiſts* are kept ſtill entangled in their ſins, and errors; and many alſo of (our moſt dear Chriſtian brethren) *Proteſtants*, are drawn into *dangerous opinions*, and *wicked practiſes*.

The only thing then you are now unſatisfied in, is, that the *Devill* ſometime raiſes ſuch *conſolations* in the *ſervants of God*: the *Devill* is too cunning, and ſo malicious to let any of his old ſnares (eſpecially theſe

ſpirituall ſnares, which are leſs diſcernible then others,) lie by un-employed; he ſtill caſts them abroad, even among the *ſervants of God.*

When he obſerves ſome *ſervants of God*, to have ſuch ſtore of theſe *conſolations* from *Heaven*, that all his *temptations* to divert them from *Gods ſervice*, or to neglect theſe *comforts of God*, prevaile as little againſt them, as *new ropes* did againſt *Samſon*, that the *ſtrength* of their *conſolations breaks them as a thread*; and that they are ſtill *encouraged by them* to goe on in the *ſervice and worſhip of God*, then he is ready to *adde*, to their *abundance*, and gives them *a fuller meaſure* of *conſolations*, *adding ſtore of his, to theirs.*

And after a while, when they have taken much *delight* and *pleaſure* in the performance of *holy duties*, then he ſlily goes about to perſwade them, that they are more *holy*, and more *devout*, then they *were*, yea then other *men are*; becauſe they *abound* more with ſuch *conſolations*, then *they* themſelves *formerly did*, or then *other men now doe*; and then he *tempts* them to think, that *theſe Chriſtian duties* of *Prayers* and the like, whereat they feel theſe *conſolations*, are the *only duties* required at *their hands*;

hands; that their *devotion at Prayers* and *Sermons* is *holineſs enough*, they may reſt ſatisfied that they are accepted with God, (who ſends them ſuch abundance of *comfort*) and need not betake themſelves to the practiſe of any other *holy duties*: Thus if the *Devill* can make theſe *conſolations*, as he made the *Corban* to the *Phariſees* (*a plea to excuſe them from other duties*) hee will plentifully beſtow them upon *thoſe* whom he *moſt* labours to win to himſelf, *the true ſervants of God.*

It is reported of one of the *Fathers* (Saint *Hierom* I take it) that while he was at the *holy Table of God* at *publick Prayers* for the *Congregation*, he was on a ſuddain ſo *ſenſibly affected*, that his tears interrupted *his words*, and *ſpeak* he could not for *weeping*; and after that *pauſe of ſilence*, he checked the *tempter*, ſaying, *Etiam hic ſtas inimice nequam! Doeſt thou purſue me even to the horns of the Altar, oh thou wicked enemy? Is not this a place of refuge? is not this a Sanctuary to be ſecure in, from thy temptations?*

Thus the devout *Fathers* of old reckoned theſe *conſolations*, *ſometimes*, among the *temptations* of the *Devill.*

Oh that the Lord would diſcover to all

Pa-

Papists, and *Protestants*, this *slie* and *subtle snare* of the *hunter*, and help us to *break it in sunder*.

And now I hope you are fully satisfied. I have writ the more largely of them, that I might hereby give you warning, that all is not *gold that glisters*; all who appear to us like *Angels of light*, come not *from heaven*; and by what I have written, it will not be hard, to discern the *true* from the *counterfeit*, the *consolations of God* from *those* of the *Devil*.

And for a close of all, though these *consolations* of yours are (you hope) from the *holy Spirit* (*who giveth every good thing plenteously*) yet there may be *too much delight* taken in them; and *temptations* there may come to *rest in them*, to think your self, *not only* the *more happy*, but also the *more holy*, and the *more fervent for them*; yea, and *holy enough with them*: But labour I pray to *abound* (as with *comfort*) so in every *good work*, knowing that the more *comfort* you *receive*, the *more holiness* you *must return*; these *consolations* are extraordinary *hires* to *virtue* and *holiness*; and the greater your *hire* is, the *more diligently* you should *labour* in the *vineyard of God*.

And last of all, as your *comforts* and *vir-*

tues

tues encreaſe, ſo endevour, that the chief of all *virtues*, *Humility*, may *abound* and *encreaſe* in you daily: Have an eſpeciall care leſt the *Serpent bruiſe the heel*, the latter end of your life, by *exalting you about meaſure*, for *the abundance of your heavenly comforts, and holy vertues*; This is the hearty wiſh, and moſt fervent prayer of

Your friend and ſervant
in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord.

The twelfth Letter.

The pious ſoul encreaſing in holy fear and godlineſs, is much troubled with doubts, and ſcruples.

Sir,

IT is now almoſt a year ſince I wrote to you laſt, and though I had no preſent need of your directions, you might reaſonably expect ſome Letters from me; but the truth is, I am again conſtrained to write, and your readineſſe to anſwer me formerly, and that ſo largely, makes me preſume (without any farther apology) to deſire your directions again. Not in that

that former Caſe, I have fully reſigned up my ſelf to God, and am learning in whatſoever ſtate I am (whether of *comforts*, or of *ſorrowfulneſs*) therewith to be content: but in another Caſe, concerning doubts, and ſcruples.

For, Sir, though in matters of faith (I bleſs God) I waver not, yet in matters of fact, both divine, and civill; ſpirituall, and temporall, many doubts and ſcruples (I know not what to call them) ariſe in me daily. And though God hath given me a moſt ſincere, and unfeigned deſire to pleaſe him, yet in many things I offend, in moſt things I fear and doubt.

One while, I fear, I indulge too much liberty to others, and too little to my ſelf: another while, that I am too ſtrict to others, and too remiſs to my ſelf; and therefore I mete not to others, as I mete to my ſelf. I multiply quæres againſt my ſelf; whether this *duty* was well performed, or not; *this action* lawfull, or not; *that word*, or *ſilence*, ſeaſonable, or not; And for *commerce*, and *traffick* with my neighbours, whether *this*, and *that bargain* were juſt, not prejudicing my ſelf, nor over-reaching him. And when I would give thanks for any thing well done, (through Gods grace in

in me) I think it might have been better done, and that therefore my thanksgiving may be deferred.

Yesterday I considered, and determined *affirmatively*, in *this*, and *negatively* in *that matter*; and *to day* somewhat is suggested against the *one*, and the *other*: *one day* my conscience excuseth what I the *other day* judged amiss; and *to day* it accuseth for what I *formerly* judged aright: so that I scarce satisfie my self in *one duty*, or in *one business* of *ten*.

Now, Sir, if these *motions* be from the *Spirit* of *God* in me, I *must hearken what the Lord God saith to my soul*; at my utmost perill it is, if I receive not, and cherish not those *motions*: and if they be *doubts* I raise of my self, they are not to be neglected, there is danger (my books tell me) in that; but if they be *scruples*, heeding them is dangerous: so there is danger, on every side.

And though I considered not the danger, yet I would not entertain *doubts*, and *scruples* with such humble obedience, as I desire to receive the *motions* of the *blessed Spirit*; nor examine *these* so strictly at the dore of my soul, before I open, as I doe those suspicious *doubts* and *scruples*.

And

And therefore I earneſtly deſire your directions how to diſcover when theſe *motions* (in my *mind*) come from the *holy Spirit*, and when they are *doubts*, or *ſcruples* of mine own: and then what to doe in the *caſe* of *doubts*, and what in the *caſe* of *ſcruples*; how to ſuppreſſe, or ſatisfie thoſe I have, and how to prevent the like hereafter.

For alas, Sir, much time which would be employed in performance of *holy duties* (in which it is fit I ſhould daily advance, as in *grace* and *virtue*) is ſpent every day in argument and diſpute, with theſe *doubts* and *ſcruples*; which make me preſs for a ſuddain Anſwer, whereby you may further oblige

Your friend and ſervant

in Chriſt our Lord.

The

The Answer.

A tender Conscience most subject to scruples: The difference between a scrupulous Conscience, and a doubtfull; and what to doe when doubts, and what when scruples arise: Eleven directions to cure, or prevent a scrupulous Conscience.

Sir,

BY your last Letters I am comforted more and more, perceiving by them your *progresse* and *proficiency* in *holinesse*, and *purity*: I much commend that *universal care* you have, of *all your ways*, that you so strictly examine every one of your actions before you undertake them, and call them back again, to your account afterwards, and that you set God before you, in all your wayes.

Which *care* of yours would not be any whit abated, nor any while discontinued: you must still *strein* at *gnats*, lest swallowing *them*, make way for *Camels*, or many of them, amount to a *Camel*: Esteem not any thing so little, as to adventure upon it without consideration, lest that (or your inconsideration in it) prove a sin, though a little one. And

And with this *care* and diligent *examination*, you muſt ever retain thoſe *humble thoughts* you expreſs of your own *performances*: we doe not all we ought to doe, nor is that we doe, alway done ſo well, as we might have done it, by the grace of God, that is in us; Or, if we failed in neither of theſe, but performed all we ought, as wel, as Gods grace did then enable us, yet are we unprofitable ſervants; and thereupon the *Apoſtle* chargeth us *to paſs all the time of our ſojourning here in fear.*

This *fear* will advance our *awe*, and *reverence* to *God*; it will *quicken* us in his *ſervice*, and make us more *diligent*; and it wil truly *humble* us, in, and after, all our *performances.*

And yet I muſt tel you, this *fear is* very prone to be extravagant, and to run out into vain *doubts*, and *ſcruples*; And our task it is, to keep it, and to moderate it; not to caſt it off, nor yet to let it run out: If we keep this *fear* within its bounds and due limits, it will bring forth thoſe effects of *reverence*, and *diligence*, and *humility*, and only *theſe*, and ſuch like, which it *naturally* produceth; but if it break out beyond its bound, this ſpurious brood of *doubts* and *ſcruples*, (which are only *accidentally*

dentally incident unto it) will break in upon us.

And now concerning *your duties* (though it be very hard to give particular ſatisfaction in generall caſes, eſpeciallly in this of *doubting*, which commonly carries with it much unſatisfiedneſſe) ſomewhat I ſhal anſwer, and in the ſame method which you propound.

Firſt, how you ſhould know whether theſe *motions* and *inclinations* of your *mind*, to doe *this*, or *that*, or your *doubt* of *this* or *that* done, be from the *holy Spirit of God*, or not?

It will be very reaſonable to grant, that ſome (perhaps many) of thoſe *motions*, which you refer to, in your Letter, are from that *bleſſed Spirit*; either *checking* you, for *negligence*, and *remiſneſs* in his *ſervice*; or *ſtirring* you up to *greater care* and *diligence*; and if they come from heaven, receive them you muſt with all humility, and obey them with all readineſſe and chearfulneſſe.

But that you may diſcern, whence the *motions* in you proceed, it will be neceſſary to examine them; Firſt, whether they be *according* to the *law* of *right reaſon* written in our hearts, and to the *divine*

Law

Law of *God* written in *holy Scripture*, and to other *Civill* and *Eccleſiaſticall laws*, to which we owe obedience: or whether they be *contrary* to *theſe*, or any of *theſe*: or (if neither *according*, nor *contrary* to any one of thoſe *laws*) whether they be *beſide them* all.

If the *motion* within you, ſtir you up, to doe what is commanded by any of *theſe laws*, or to forbear what is forbidden by *any of them*, this you may conclude to be a *motion* of the *holy Spirit*, and whitherſoever it calls you, gird up your loines, and follow it. It is ſome *virtue* of *piety*, or *juſtice*, *temperance*, or *obedience*, or ſuch like, or ſome higher *degree* of *them*, it cals you unto.

But ſecondly, if it prove *againſt* theſe *laws*, contrariant and repugnant to *theſe*, or to *any of theſe*, though but to the *law* of *Man* (at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a caſe, when it is binding) this is a *temptation*; either of the *fleſh*, the *world*, or the *Devill*, and then I need not tell you, that you muſt trample it under your feet. Theſe cannot be *motions* of the *holy Spirit*, who is the ſame *yeſterday*, and *to day*, and *for ever*; changeth not his *truth*, nor his poſitive *laws*, no more then his *eſſence*; no, they

they are not ſo much as *doubts*, or *ſcruples*.

And when in the third place, if the *motion* be neither *according* to, nor *againſt theſe laws*, or any of them expreſly, but *beſide them*, of ſomewhat wherein *theſe laws* give no ſpeciall *command*, nor *prohibition*; in ſuch *motions*, *doubts* and *ſcruples* will ariſe: And how to diſtinguiſh which of them are *doubts*, and which *ſcruples*, will be very materiall, and not very eaſie: yet ſomewhat I ſhall ſay, becauſe many good, and tender conſciences, are much troubled with them; and the moſt tender perplexed about them, moſt.

As there are degrees of *ſtupefaction* in *evill conſciences*, ſome *dull* and *drowſie*, others in a *dead ſleep*, *ſeared* and *cauteriſed* (as the Apoſtle phraſeth it:) ſo alſo there are degrees of *quickneſs*, and *tenderneſs*, in *good conſciences*; ſome farre more *vigilant* and *tender* then *others*, which are *good* alſo: yet with this difference, the more *ſtupefaction* and *dulneſs*, the *worſe* that *conſcience*; though not on the contrary, the more *tenderneſs*, the better.

For there is a certain limit of *tenderneſs* in *conſcience*, which if we exceed, though

though we ſinne not *in exceeding*, yet we ſcarcely avoid ſin *by exceeding* its limits; They who keep themſelves ſtrictly *within* thoſe bounds, are the *ſafeſt*; yea, and the *beſt* (though not the *moſt tender*) *conſciences*: for although a *conſcience* cannot bee *too good*, yet it may be *too tender*; I mean not, that a *conſcience* may bee *too full* of *care* to ſerve and pleaſe God, but that it may be *too full* of *doubts* and *ſcruples* in *caring*; and this I call *too tender*, becauſe *its tenderneſs* is very prejudiciall in the effects of it.

Therefore, as you ought to bleſs God becauſe he hath given you a *tender conſcience*, ſo alſo you ought to crave of him, that it be a *firm*, and a *reſolved conſcience*; that it exceed not ſo *in tenderneſſe*, as to abound with theſe diſtracting *doubts* and *ſcruples*: And as you muſt pray for it, ſo alſo you muſt endevour to procure this *firm* and *ſtable conſcience*, by *grounding* it upon a *ſure foundation*.

Now the *foundation* whereupon your *conſcience* ought to *build*, is a *perſwaſion that this, or that, you are about to doe, is lawful, and juſt*; and according to the ſeverall degrees of *Perſwaſion*, there are ſeverall degrees of *firmneſs* and *ſtability* of *conſci-*

conſcience, in ſeverall men; yea, in one and the ſame man, concerning ſeverall actions.

If your *perſwaſion* be grounded upon *faith* in the *Word* of *God*, that you are *perſwaded* to doe *this*, or *that*, becauſe the *Word* of *God directs* you in it, this is a *ſure rule*, and your *perſwaſion* I ſuppoſe moſt *full*, and moſt *firm*. Or if your *perſwaſion* be grounded upon *knowledge*; that is, you are *perſwaded* to doe *this*, and to forbear *that*, becauſe you *know* that the letter and meaning of the *law directs* you, both to *this*, and *that*, this is alſo a *ſure rule*, and your *perſwaſion* may be *full* and *firm*. And when you doe any thing upon *full perſwaſion*, by the *dictate* of *faith* in the *Word* of *God*, or by the *dictate* of *knowledge* in the binding *Laws* of the *Church* or *Kingdome*, you *build* upon a *rock*, and the *floods* of *doubts*, and *waves* of *ſcruples* (*though they beat vehemently*) ſhould not *ſhake* you. But commonly our *perſwaſion* is *grounded* upon *opinion* onely; I am of *opinion*, that *this* is *lawfull* and *juſt*; that *this* is *according* to the *rule*, which the *Scripture* gives; or that *this* is the *meaning* of ſuch a *Law*, and thereupon I am *perſwaded* to doe *this*. As when the *Scripture* directs me in generall,

that

that *all be done decently*, and *in order* my *opinion* tels me, that this is *decent*, and *orderly*; that *uncomely* and *disorderly*, and thereupon I doe *that*, and forbear *this*.

And seeing our *perswasion* in every particular action cannot be *grounded* upon *faith* or *knowledge*, becauſe the *Word* of *God*, and *binding laws*, are too generall, for particular *directions* in every caſe, therefore, where they uphold not our *perswasion*, *opinion* muſt.

And, Sir, though your *perswasion* be ſometimes *grounded* only upon an *opinion*, that you doe *according* to the generall *directions* in the *Word* of *God*, or in the *Law*, even then your *perswasion* may be *full*, and your *conſcience firm*. Not ſuch a *Plerophory*, indeed, of *perswasion*, as when *faith* or *knowledge* upheld it; yet ſuch a *fulneſs* your *opinion* will bring, as is able to make your conſcience *firm* and *ſtable*.

For where *faith* or *knowledge* guide us, there is ſuch a certainty, that there is no *fear* at all of the *contrary*; what we *believe*, and *know*, cannot be *otherwiſe*, then *ſo*: But where we have onely *opinion* for our *guide*, there is alway, *Formido contrarii*,

vii, a ſecret *fear* that the *contrary* way may be the *right*, and not *this*.

Yet ſuch a *firmneſſe* there is alway in this *conſcience* which is *guided* by *opinion* only, as truly to diſtinguiſh it from a *doubtfull conſcience*, and to advance *it*, above *that*: For *a doubtfull conſcience* wavers between this, and that, halts (as the Prophet cals it) between *one* and *another*, *gives no judgement*, *nor deciſion*, *that this*, *or that is to be done*; if once it *determines* (though but upon opinion) this is no longer a *doubting conſcience*.

Indeed, if the *determination* be *faint* and *weak*, this may goe for an *inclination* to *this*, rather then to *that*, it is no abſolute *opinion* of it; and ſo it is not yet beyond the bounds of *doubting*: but as ſoon as the *opinion* is *fixed*, the *determination peremptory* (as *ſentences* and *deciſions* of our *judgement*, and *opinion* uſe to be) then *doubting* is ſhut out of dores; And as this is a *firm conſcience*, ſo alſo (if the *opinion* be not *erroneous*) it is a *good* and a *juſt Conſcience*.

Thus if you once *ſettle*, and *fix* your *opinion*, *doubting* is gone, the *indeterminate wavering* of *this*, cannot conſiſt with the

determination, and *reſolution* of *that*.

But then for *ſcruples*, they are not ſo eaſily excluded; they will creep upon us concerning thoſe actions which are *grounded* upon *faith*, and *knowledge*, and therefore you cannot hope that thoſe actions, which are *grounded* upon *opinion* onely, ſhould be free from them.

For *ſcruples* are ſaid to be, *only probable arguments againſt our actions*: now ſeeing whatſoever our actions are *grounded* upon (whether upon *faith*, or *knowledge*, or *opinion*) there may be *arguments* ſuggeſted (at leaſt as *probable*) againſt them, *ſcruples* therefore may conſiſt with the *moſt firm Conſcience*.

And upon this, the difference will be plain between *doubts* and *ſcruples*: *Doubts* doe *ſuſpend* the *judgement*; no *deciſion*, on this or that ſide where *doubting* is; but *ſcruples* may conſiſt with that *judgement* which *opinion* gives; yea, with that, which *faith*, or *knowledge* give, as abſolute, and as firm, as they are: *Scruples* may come in, whatſoever we doe, and trouble us, and ſhake us, and their deſign is to weaken, and diſhearten us too.

Examine then by this, whether yours be *doubts*, or *ſcruples*: If that *ſentence* which

which your *faith*, or *knowledge*, or *opinion* gave, concerning *this*, or *that*, to be *done*, or left *undone*, ſtands ſtill *firm*, as when you *gave* it *firſt*, *unreverſed*, it is not a *doubt*, which ariſeth in you, concerning *this*, or *that*; but a *ſcruple* only: a *doubt reverſes the ſentence, already given, and ſuſpends from giving any other*; this is only an *argument*, which, though it hath not reaſon enough, to prevaile with you, for *reverſing* the *ſentence* and *judgement*, which directed you, in *this* or *that* action, yet it ſeemes to have *probability* enough, to trouble, and diſquiet you, about it.

And when you have diſtinguiſhed, whether theſe *motions* which ariſe in you, be *doubts*, or *ſcruples*, you muſt do accordingly, which brings on the anſwer to the particular your Letter mentions.

And it will be materiall for you to obſerve what you imply in your Letter, That theſe *motions* ariſe in you, one while upon *deliberation* of *what is to be done*; and another while, upon *re-examination of that which hath been done.*

If they ariſe, *before you doe this*, or *that* the queſtion then is, within your ſelf, *whether you ought to doe this, or that*; *or*

whether you are bound to doe it, thus, or thus: and if theſe *motions* be then ſo impetuous upon you, as to cauſe you truly to *doubt*, whether *that* you are about be lawfull, or unlawfull, in that caſe you have an *expreſſe direction* from the Apoſtle. *Whatſoever is not of faith, is ſin*: that is, *whatſoever we doe without a full perſwaſion, and opinion of the lawfulneſſe of it, is ſinne.*

When our *Conſcience doubteth*, and *ſuſpendeth* to *judge*, or *determine this*, or *that*, we muſt *ſuſpend* from *doing this*, or *that*, which it *doubts* of; He, who doth what he himſelf doth not *determine*, to be *right* and *fit*, but *wavers*, and *doubts*, whether it be ſo, or no, *ſinneth.*

In which caſe of *doubting* of theſe two, doing, or not doing; it is as likely to doe what is right, as what is not; there is one way to chuſe the good, and but one way to chuſe the evill; and yet I ſay not only, hee may ſin by taking the left hand, but hee does ſin, though he lights upon the right: for though he doth that which is *right*, he doth it not *rightly*; he ventured *blindfold* upon it, without any *guide* of *faith*, *knowledge*, or *opinion*, *doubtingly.*

To prevent this certain *ſinning*, by doing

ing *doubtingly*, you muſt reſolve your ſelf *fully* of the *lawfulneſſe* of all your *actions* before you undertake them, that you *condemn not your ſelf, in that, which you allow your ſelf*, to doe. *Be fully perſwaded in your own mind*, that you may doe this, or that, *lawfully*; and then doe it.

But then if theſe *motions* which ariſe in you, are found to be only *ſcruples*; you are *fully perſwaded* in your own *mind*, that you ought to doe *this*, or *that*, and yet objections crowd into your mind, to the contrary; in that caſe I muſt joyn with your *full perſwaſion*, and put you forward to doe that, which *it* directs to do, and that with *chearfulneſſe*, and ſpeed: if you defer till theſe *ſcruples* be allayed; *others* may ariſe, and then you muſt ſtay to ſatisfie *them* alſo, and ſo it is too likely that you will wholly neglect that *duty*; for *ſcruples* will encreaſe and multiply, ſo much the more, if they be heeded, and cheriſhed.

Thus if your *motions* be upon *deliberation what is to be done*: but now if they bee upon *re-examination, what hath been done*, and the queſtion is, *whether this, or that, were well done?* in this caſe, you muſt recall to mind, upon what *grounds* you did *this*, or *that*; whether *faith*,

knowledge, or *opinion* directed you ſo to doe? And of theſe, *opinion* is moſt likely to deceive you; yea, *that onely* can miſlead you (for that is not *faith*, nor *knowledge* neither (but an *opinion* only that it is *faith*, or *knowledge*) which can *direct* you to doe any thing, that is amiſs.) And if it appear to you *now*, that the *opinion* which *directed* you *then*, was not true; you were fully *perſwaded* in your *mind*, but *erroneouſly perſwaded*; then your buſineſſe will be, to caſt off that *error*, to *repent* of it, and to *repent* alſo of that *action* into which your *blind guide* miſled you: And if the *action* were of that nature, as *ſlander* and *injuſtice* againſt our neighbour, you are bound alſo to *repair* your brother, in whatſoever he was *damniſied* by *it*.

Thus you know many, who were once of that *opinion* (wherein ſome *Proteſtants*, and moſt *Papiſts*, agree) that *it is lawfull to propagate the true Religion, by force and war*, (and thereupon engaged themſelves in *ſpoiling* and *robbing*, and *ſlaying* the *diſſentient Party*) who being *now* of another *opinion*, that to *reform Religion by the ſword, is an offering violence to the tender conſciences of many, and a doing*

ing evill, that good may come of it, ſpend their time wholly in lamenting their former *error* and *ſin*; and *their eſtates*, in *repairing* ſuch men, whom in that their *error*, they had *ſpoiled* and *injured*.

Though the *action* was done upon a full *perſwaſion* of the *lawfulneſſe* of it, yet that *perſwaſion* appearing now *erroneous*, ſuch *repentance*, and *reſtitution*, they think required of them.

And in other men, where theſe *motions* produce not a *contrary Opinion*, yet *Doubts* they may *produce*; and thus it may be with you: when you undertook *this*, or *that action*, you were *fully perſwaded in your minde of the lawfulneſſe of it*; but now *doubts* ariſe in you concerning it; and you cannot *determine* whether you did *lawfully*, or *unlawfully* in it; in this caſe, your labour will be to reſolve your ſelf *de novo*, to ſtudy and conſult of the *lawfulneſſe* of that *action*, as if you were now again to undertake it; and when your *doubt* is *reſolved* into an *opinion*, you need little direction in that caſe: If it be the ſame *opinion* again *reſumed*, which *guided* you to that *action*, then you may bleſs God, and plead your innocency in that *action*, againſt all *Objectors*, and

objections: If you are convinced by *reason*, and *argument*, to *alter* your *opinion*, then the former *direction* (of repentance and restitution) is to you in this case also.

And thus I meet with some, in every street, who took *Oathes*, and *Covenants*, upon the *full perswasion* of the *lawfulnesse* of them, now so much *doubting* whether they did well, or ill therein, that they *consult* their *Bookes*, and their *spirituall Directors* afresh, to be resolved concerning *them:* and when they *alter* their *opinions* (though their *Oath* cannot be *unsworn*, nor the *actions*, done in purfuance of it, *undone*) yet I hope to see them so truly *penitent*, that these *sins* will not be laid to their charge.

And thirdly, if these *motions* which arise in your *mind*, *upon re-examination of what you have done*, be *scruples* onely; *Arguments* (or *objections* rather) suggested as probable, which do no way divert, you from *your opinion* which *guided* you in *this*, or *that Action*; nor yet bring you into a true *doubt*, whether your *action* were *lawful* or *not*; in this Case, the more you neglect these *scrupulous motions*, the better and the sooner you will possesse your soul in quietnesse and peace.

And

And now Sir, that you may be the better able to eject thoſe *ſcruples* you have already, and to prevent others alſo hereafter, (which is the third thing you deſire reſolution in) you ſhall doe well; Firſt, truly to inform your ſelf of the *cauſe*, or *original*, whence *they* proceed.

In ſome, ſcruples proceed from the *temper* of the *body*: a *melancholick conſtitution*, which is moſt ſubject to *fears* and *ſadneſs*, if it hath a *tender Conſcience* therewith, is commonly *full* of theſe *ſcruples*, alſo: In others they proceed from a *ſceptical wit*, which is alway enquiring, ſeldom ſatisfied; if that *temper* and this *wit* meet together, with a *tender Conſcience*, *ſcruples* will abound: In others, they may be from the *Devill*; he (by *indiſpoſing* our *bodies*, or *raiſing fanſies*, or otherwiſe more immediatly, by himſelf, without any advantage taken from us) caſt theſe *ſcruples* into our minds. Where I hear of *Motions* to be *preciſe* and *ſtrict* in *one Duty*, if I ſee inclinations to *remiſneſs* and *neglect*, in another *Duty*, as neceſſary as that former: I ſuſpect theſe *ſcruples* to be from the *Devill*; It is the *holy Spirit* which moves us to *univerſall ſtrictneſs* in all *Duties*, the *evill ſpirit*

may ſometime move to *Partial ſtrictneſſe*, in *one* or *two Duties*; It is an old policy of *his*, to make us uneven in our obedience, to *ſtraine* at *one gnat*, and not at *another*.

And from what cauſes ſoever theſe *ſcruples* proceed, they commonly come like Angels of light, with goodly ſhewes, and holy *language*, *moving to more exact obedience* (as is pretended) *and to more univerſal*, and *more punctual performances*. And this they uſually urge ſo eagerly, that it is hard to diſtinguiſh them from thoſe *motions* of the *holy Spirit*, which I ſpake of even nõw: your *examination* of them therefore muſt be with ſome diligence: and if after that, you find thoſe *motions* and *fervors* in your *mind*, not to be from the *holy Spirit*, but *ſcruples* proceeding from one of theſe fountains, or from ſuch like;

Then ſecondly, you may conſider the many *inconveniences* which they may bring upon you; how they *weaken* your *mind*, make it *unſtable* as water; how they *diſturb* you in *many* performances, *divert* you from *ſome*; how *inconſiſtent* they are with that *ſerenity* of *conſcience*, and *chearfulneſſe* of *mind*, which

which otherwiſe you might enjoy; how they *darken* your *underſtanding*, and make your *will* and *affections* alſo *dull* and *heavy* in *holy duties*, and your whole *life uncomfortable*; how they *lead* into *error* and *ſuperſtition* oft-times, and may at length bring you into *fear* and *perplexity*; yea (if the Devill can have his will) even into *deſperation it ſelf*: when you reckon up theſe, and what other *inconveniences* you find, or can fear from theſe *ſcruples*, you will not delay to obſerve what you think fitteſt for your *cure*, or *eaſe*.

Therefore, thirdly, ſome directions I ſhall name: and I muſt begin with the chief; *Humble* and *fervent prayer* to God, from whom alone you can receive comfort and quiet: then *ghoſtly adviſe* and direction from friends, praying God to direct your director, and reſolving (if poſſible) to reſt ſatisfied in what he directs. Thirdly, *divert*, I pray, your ſelf from theſe *ſcruples* (as much as you can) caſt off the thoughts of them, foment them not by heeding them, *nor* by *converſing frequently*, with *ſcrupulous perſons*; yea, drive them away by croſſe *ſcruples*, that is, propounding your *more probable*

probable Arguments againſt thoſe *leſs probable.*

Or a fourth way may be, by *adhering* to thoſe *opinions*, which are *moſt probable, moſt favorable*, and *moſt common*, and by ordering our practiſes after *them*; *rigid*, and *ſingular opinions* open a wide door for *ſcruples* to enter in.

A fift: Conſider, I pray, in all your perplexities, the wonderfull *moderation* of *Chriſts Commands*; that he hath taken away the *rigor* of the *law*, and requires no more of us, then he enables us to perform: He expects not, from us, the performance of all things, in that manner, as they may be done, by our *utmoſt poſſible diligence* and care, but accepts them, at his throne of grace, if they be performed by our *utmoſt morall diligence*, and care: according to the ordinary courſe of humane diligence in other matters: therefore we ought not to be diſquieted, that we doe not our utmoſt *poſſible* diligence, to obſerve his commands, for by ſuch *ſcruples* we ſhall be ſlacked and hindred in doing our utmoſt *moral* diligence.

A ſixt: To *truſt* in *Gods mercies* through Chriſt, that he will give grace to enable us to what he requires, and pardon

don what is amiſs: He knows whereof we are made, how frail and weak we are, and will have compaſſion of our infirmities.

Seventhly, to be truly *ſenſible* of our own *natural corruption*, that of our ſelves we are not able to think a good thought, it muſt be the *grace* of *God* which enables us: and by that *grace* we are *not enabled* (in this our frail condition) to that *exact performance* which the *rigor* of the *law* requires; only to that *ſincere* and *upright obedience*, which God (through Chriſt) will be pleaſed to accept. And though I hope no *Scruples* ariſe in you, preſuming of your *naturall ſtrength*, yet ſome may ariſe, not weighing the *imperfection* of our *mortal condition*, even in our *regenerate ſtate*: And if ſo, it will be a good means towards the cure, that you learn to diſcern between your *perſonal weakneſſes*, and *thoſe* of our *mortal condition*, (which are common to all, while they are in the fleſh) and charge your ſelf as culpable, and *ſinfull*, only in thoſe *particular* defects, not in theſe *general* ones: It is an *unhappineſs* (not to be thought on without grief of heart) that we cannot now live (as in Paradiſe) exactly performing

forming the will of God alwayes, in all things, with all our faculties; but I hope (if it be lamented) it will not amount to a ſin at Chriſts throne of grace.

An eighth, rightly to underſtand that generall rule of the Caſuiſts, *In dubiis tutior pars eligenda, in doubtfull matters to chuſe the ſafeſt ſide*; Firſt, it muſt be in *doubtfull* matters, where there is truly a *doubt*, not in *ſcrupulous* matters. Secondly, we are not alway bound to *chuſe* the *ſafeſt*, provided that what we *chuſe* is *ſafe*: which is the *ſafeſt* will be hard to reſolve in ſome caſes, and if you ſtay for that reſolution, *ſcruples* will flow in. You doe *not ſin*, if you *chuſe* that which is ſafe; and that is *ſafe* which (as I ſaid before) is *grounded* upon *faith*, *knowledge*, or *opinion*, ſo you be not deceived in them.

A ninth may be, by qualifying that ſtrict opinion, *that we are alway bound to doe that which is beſt*; it is moſt true we are to *aim* at the faireſt, and *beſt*, and to *preſs towards* it; but if then we miſs it, and come ſhort of it, we *ſin not*; if that which you doe be *good*, though it might have been better, *lament* the *imperfection* you ſhould, and yet *praiſe God* for the *goodneſſe* of it.

A

A tenth may be, by conſidering that *affirmative precepts lay not ſo ſtrict an obligation upon us, as negative precepts do: Negative Precepts obligant ad ſemper*, (as Caſuiſts ſpeak) *affirmative* not: for *negative* precepts are not broken, but by *committing* ſome act; affirmative by *omitting* only; and our obligation is not ſo ſtrict againſt *omitting*, as it is againſt *committing*. A caſe may happen, wherein it may be lawfull to *omit* the *affirmative* (as *keeping* the *holy Feſtivals*, and *Faſts* of the *Church*, for *God will have mercy, and not ſacrifice*) though no caſe can poſſibly happen, where I may lawfully *commit* that which is againſt the *negative*; I cannot be excuſed, if I take *Gods name in vain*, by *Oaths* and *Covenants*, though *mercifulneſſe* towards *my ſelf, wife*, and *children*, (in ſaving my eſtate thereby) *plead for me*: and ſo for other *Negative precepts*: therefore if the checks you hear within your ſelf be concerning *Affirmatives*, they may be the more ſuſpected for *ſcruples*, and ſooner anſwered, then if they be concerning *Negatives*.

Laſtly, ſeeing theſe *ſcruples* come to you with ſuch *good words*, and ſuch *holy pretences*, the beſt way to defeat them of their miſchievous purpoſes is, to take them at thoſe

thoſe their *good words*, and go no further with them; Let thoſe words of *theirs* ſtir you up to a more *univerſall* and a more *exact care*, in the *ſervice* of *God*; thus you may make even *theſe deceitfull Gibeonites ſerviceable to the uſe of Gods Tabernacle.*

Thus, beeauſe the danger from theſe *ſcruples* may be great, therefore the *directions* to ſuppreſſe and prevent, or to defeat them, are many; and yet more you may ſuggeſt to your ſelf, or read in *bookes* of *Devotion*, and *Caſuiſts*: By ſome of theſe, or ſuch like, you may (I doubt not) obtain *eaſe* from your *perplexities*; and *peace* and *comfort* in your *holy* and *juſt performances.* And (as in the diſeaſes of your body, ſo in this of your ſoul) the ſooner you go about the cure, the better; it is eaſieſt at firſt; the more theſe *ſcruples* gain upon you, the more unſatisfiable they are, and there will be the greater difficulty to caſt them out.

And here I muſt adde a caution or two, Firſt, that you take very great heed, that you eject not the *motions* of the *bleſſed Spirit*, as if they were *Scruples*; that you learn to diſtinguiſh between *Thoſe*, and *Theſe*: and whenſoever *thoſe knock* at *the dore of your heart*, *open to them*; when-

whenſoever they cal, or whiſper to you, ſay, *Speak Lord, for thy ſervant heareth.*

Secondly, that you beware of the common error of the world, which is, to account all *ſtrict rules* of *Juſtice*, or *Temperance*, *Obedience* to *Parents*; yea, and the *punctuall*, *preciſe ſervice of God*, (though they be moſt abſolutely neceſſary) *Scruples* and *Niceties*: and deride the practiſers of ſuch rules, as *ſcrupulous perſons*.

And now at laſt in the cloſe of your Letter, you ſeeme to grutch all time, which is not ſpent by you in *holy Duties* and *Prayer*, and you think fit to advance in them, as in other *graces* and *virtues*: *Love*, I ſee, is *liberall*, and where you *love much*, you will ſtill be *giving more*.

And the more you encreaſe in *Love*, the leſſe will that ſeem to be which you beſtow; that which is *much* now, will ſeem *leſs* hereafter: And if you think fit your *holy Duties* of *Prayer* and *Meditation* ſhould advance ſtill, in proportion to your *Love*; Remember withall, that of *Iacob* (the mighty man of *Prayer*) *to drive no faſter, then the children and cattel* (your weak body, *Iumentum animæ*, as the Fathers call it) *are able to endure*. Now

Now my *Prayer* shall be, That all these *shakings* by *doubts* and *scruples* may tend to *root* you more *deep*, and more *firm* in the *love* of our *Lord Jesus Christ*, to whose grace and mercy I commend you, and rest

Your servant in Christ Jesus.

I. D.

A

A Brief of the ſeverals in this TREATISE.

A *Letter, containing many remarkable paſſages in the moſt holy* Life *and* Death *of the Lady* Letice *Vi-Counteſs* Falkland.

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D. Greg. Moral. l. 24. c. 28.

Vitam uniuſcujuſque converſi, & inchoatio blanda permulcet, & aſpera medietas probat, & plena poſt perfectio roborat.

D. Greg. Moral. l. 14. c. 28.

Quiſque in ipſo Converſionis initio, magna plerumque excipitur dulcedine conſolationis: *ſed durum laborem poſtmodum experitur probationis. Tres quippe modi ſunt Converſorum, Inchoatio, Medietas, atque Perfectio. In Inchoatione inveniunt Blandimenta Dulcedinis, in medio quoque tempore Certamina Tentationis; ad extremum verò Perfectionem Plenitudinis. Prius ergo illos Dulcia ſuſcipiunt, quæ conſolentur; poſtmodum amara, quæ exerceant; & tunc demum ſuavia & ſublimia, quæ confirment.*

THE END.